

The Academy

and Literature.

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The Literary Week.

THE Coronation list of honours as regards literature had its surprises, not the least being the absence of the names of Mr. Herbert Spencer, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Hardy. But in default of any official statement that the list issued last week is complete, or that certain writers who do not appear in it have declined preferment, it is premature to complain of exclusions. It is reported, by the way, that Mr. Lecky refused a Barony and Mr. Kipling a knighthood. There are other considerations than eminence in literature that dictate the conferring of an honour, and Mr. Conan Doyle's pamphlet on the Boer War, together with his ambulance work in South Africa, and Mr. Gilbert Parker's services to his party, have no doubt weighed in the scale. The list of honours to literary men is as follows:—

ORDER OF MERIT.

Mr. John Morley.
Mr. W. E. H. Lecky.

NEW K.C.B.

Sir Leslie Stephen.

NEW KNIGHTS.

Sir F. C. Burnand.
Sir A. Conan Doyle.
Sir Gilbert Parker.

THE half-yearly index that is included in the current issue of *Punch* has a special interest. For the first time the various contributions have been collected under the

names of their authors. Many of the names are quite unknown; for example, Mr. Witt, who contributed "The Rose and the Berry," and Mr. Jolly, who wrote "Drama à la Maeterlinck." Thirty-two "articles," to use the phraseology of the index, were contributed by the Editor; twenty-three by Mr. Owen Seaman; twenty-four by Mr. R. C. Lehmann, and seven by Mr. Arthur à Beckett, who is now editor of *John Bull*. Mr. G. S. Street, we observe, was the author of "Mr. Punch's Literary Limericks," and Mr. C. Tennyson of "Talks with my Bedmaker."

For the sum of £2,500 Messrs. Pickering and Chatto are offering four volumes which every book-lover would gladly buy if he could. And as these volumes are the four Shakespearean folios the price demanded is not excessive, seeing that the first folio has been sold at auction for £1,750 and the second for over £600. The copy of the third folio is perfect, and this is the one of the four most rarely found in such condition. The binding of all volumes is crimson morocco, copied from a seventeenth century binding exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Exhibition.

WE have received from the Cambridge University Press full particulars of the great *Cambridge Modern History* of which the late Lord Acton was the projector and editor. It is satisfactory to learn that Lord Acton's general scheme had been completed by him, and that the work will go forward on the lines he laid down. On his retiring from the editorship when no longer able to contend against illness, the task of giving effect to the scheme was undertaken by Dr. A. W. Ward, Master of Peterhouse, and formerly Professor of History in the Owens College, Victoria University, Manchester, Dr. G. W. Prothero, formerly Professor of History in the University of Edinburgh, and Mr. Stanley Leathes, Fellow and Lecturer in History in Trinity College. In the Preface to vol. i., the Editors state briefly the principles which they believe Lord Acton to have followed, and to which it is their intention to adhere.

TURNING to an advance copy of this preface we find an interesting statement of the aim and scope of this great work of scholarship. Its aim, we are told, is to record, in the way most useful to the greatest numbers of readers, the fulness of knowledge in the field of modern history which the nineteenth century has bequeathed to its successor. The idea of a universal modern history is not in itself new; it has already been successfully carried into execution both in France and Germany. But it is believed that the present work may, without presumption, aim higher than its predecessors, and may seek to be something more than a useful compilation or than a standard work of reference. This universal modern history proposes something distinct from the combined history of all countries—in other words, a narrative which is not a mere string of episodes, but displays a continuous development. It moves in a succession to which the nations are

subsidiary. The following list indicates the topics of the twelve volumes:—

- | | |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| Volume | I. The Renaissance. |
| " | II. The Reformation. |
| " | III. Wars of Religion. |
| " | IV. The Thirty Years' War. |
| " | V. Bourbons and Stuarts. |
| " | VI. The Eighteenth Century. |
| " | VII. The United States. |
| " | VIII. The French Revolution. |
| " | IX. Napoleon. |
| " | X. Restoration and Reaction. |
| " | XI. The Growth of Nationalities. |
| " | XII. The Latest Age. |

"C. K. S." is "privileged" to print in the *Sphere* the following interesting letter, sent by Lord Acton to one of the hundred scholars who were requested to contribute to the *Cambridge Modern History*:—

To George Sigerson, Esq., M.D., Dublin.

Trinity College, Cambridge, December 2, 1896.

DEAR DR. SIGERSON.—It is always a very great pleasure to come back to you, the best Irishman I have known. Here is my excuse this time. The University Press wishes to bring out a *Universal History of Modern Times*, and to get it written by the best scholars who use our language. Therefore the subject is divided into chapters of thirty or thirty-five pages, and in many cases one chapter is offered to one man. There will be twelve volumes of 700 pages, beginning in 1899 and ending in 1904. They have made me editor, and want me to discover and to secure the desired experts. I am succeeding well. Lecky will do Canning down to 1827, and Walpole will go on with Grey.

I have retained the three intervening years for you, denominating them by the salient point, Catholic relief, and hoping very fervently indeed that you will occupy them with Irish history from Sarsfield to O'Connell. My plan is to group things in that way and tell all Russian history when with Peter the Great Russia becomes important, South American at the Spanish Revolution, and so on. So I would tell the English and Imperial history of those three years, and couple with them by an obvious transition the former history of Ireland from the broken treaty. The fragment I offer you will be in the tenth volume and will appear in 1902.

I want you by all means to help and sustain and encourage me by accepting this moderate burden.

It will be a joy to hear from you, but a real joy only if you accede.

Believe me, ever yours most sincerely, ACTON.

THE centenary of the birth of Dumas père occurs during the present month, but we have not observed that Paris is preparing to celebrate it as she celebrated the centenary of Victor Hugo in the early part of the year—or indeed that Paris is preparing to celebrate it at all. Yet Paris is indebted to Dumas for much of her characteristic gaiety; he amused and diverted her for fifty years. More than three decades have elapsed since his unhonoured demise. Mr. Francis Gribble, in the *Fortnightly Review*, lays, we think, an undue stress on the sinister and the mock-heroic sides of Dumas' character. And he fails to point out his importance in the history of modern drama. Dumas' *Antony* was the foundation of the modern school. Mr. Gribble says that Dumas wrote forty-five plays. He wrote sixty-four plays, which may be perused with advantage by the budding dramatist in the twenty-five volumes of his *Théâtre Complet*, price a franc apiece. The prefatory essay, *How I Became a Dramatic Author*, is one of the best bits of witty autobiography that even Dumas ever accomplished. The young Scotsmen who arrive daily at King's Cross with half-a-crown and the intention of conquering London will find many hints in it useful for the execution of their nefarious purpose.

CANADA has done more than erect an arch in Whitehall in honour of the King. It has produced an Ode of considerable merit from the hand of Mr. Bliss Carman, who is head and shoulders above all other Canadian poets of to-day. Mr. Carman has produced twenty-eight stanzas which are published as a one-page-one-stanza book by the Page Company of Boston. Why at Boston? Mr. Carman's verses have all the keen open-air ring of much of his best work:—

By prairie, swale, and barren, by jungle and lagoon,
Where endless palm-trees rustle and the creamy
breakers croon,

By canyon, ford, and pass,

By desert and morass,

In snows like stinging lashes, on seas like burning
glass,

By every land and water beneath the great lone moon.

Our fathers died for England at the outposts of the
world;

Our mothers toiled for England where the settler's
smoke upcurled;

By packet, steam, and rail,

By portage, trek, and trail.

They bore a thing called honour in hearts that did
not quail,

Till the twelve great winds of heaven saw their
scarlet sign unfurled.

And here is the penultimate verse:—

O Sir, no empty rumour comes up the earth to-day
From the kindred and the peoples and the tribes a
world away;

For they know the Law will hold

And be equal as of old,

With conscience never questioned and justice never sold,

And beneath the form and letter the spirit will have play.

We find no evidence that this Ode has found an English
publisher. If not, it is a matter for regret.

THE firm which has revived and supplemented the *Encyclopædia Britannica* has a genius for advertisement, and has rarely failed to utilise any references to their great enterprise by public men. We do not know, however, what they will make of the unexpected testimonial which they have received from a Parisian subscriber, whose case is described by M. de Blowitz in the *Matin*. This subscriber, who disappeared after paying his first instalment and receiving his complete edition, and was eventually found in prison, begged the *Times* people not to take his encyclopædia away from him. "I am," he said, "a begging letter writer by profession, and at present, though I owe you £12, I only have £7 in the world. I'll give you six of them, and pay up the rest of the amount as quickly as I can. But I must keep the volumes, which are invaluable to me." He then went on to explain that, having written a letter in which he stated that he was a potter who had been chemically poisoned, and unfit to work, he used the encyclopædia for details of the pottery trade, of which he himself was entirely ignorant. The one word kaolin, which he used in his letter, and his explanation of the use of the material, made everyone believe in the genuineness of his appeal (he said), and brought him in a perfect harvest of bank notes and postal orders. This ingenious gentleman (M. de Blowitz adds) has since paid up his full subscription, and is probably one of the subscribers to the supplement.

M. DE BLOWITZ also describes for his French readers the system by which the publishers of the *E. B.* guarded themselves against undue loss, caused by the non-payment of subscribers who had already received their thirty volumes. It seems that they took their chance of dishonesty in the cheaper bound volumes, but, when a subscriber asked for a thirty months' credit for the full morocco binding, they

made inquiries, and if these were not satisfactory, returned the first guinea with regrets. Their temerity was justified, says M. de Blowitz, for on the 44,000 subscriptions they have lost only one per cent., that is to say, a sum of about £11,000 on sales to the value of £1,100,000.

MR. STEPHEN PHILLIPS still pays toll on the turnpike of success. In his July *Cornhill* someone regales us with a witty and pregnant "New Dialogue of the Dead" from which we give an extract. Aristotle has brought a copy of "Ulysses" to the notice of Odysseus who on seeing it exclaims:—

"ULYSSES"—why Ulysses?

'Twas by that name that Cicero used to call me,
Until I asked him how he'd like it if
I were to call him Markos Toullios.
Well, let that pass . . .

After a hasty examination he begins railing against Mr. Phillips for outdoing Homer and Lucian in their habit of attributing his (Odysseus') glorious deeds, his finest achievements, to heavenly intervention, so that he feels he is not properly appreciated. From this the hero goes on to pick faults with the poem in detail, and the conversation is pursued in this vein:—

Aristotle . . . Poetic Licence, as you'll soon remark,
Shows how you shot the Suitors—in the dark;
Or how, for instance—

Odysseus. Does your rule apply
To the exalted phraseology
Which Mr. Phillips suffers me to use?
As when I talk of perils by the sea
(An element I never really liked)
As of "The white leap and the dance of doom,"
Or call the beach "The glorying shingle"—sh?
This may be beautiful, I don't deny—

Aristotle. But, you would add, 'tis pitched a trifle high.
As M. Zola isn't here as yet
I may presume the maxim to recall
That Truth and Beauty are identical.
What! aren't you pleased with this—"Upon this isle
Set in the glassy ocean's azure swoon"?

Odysseus. Great Aristarchus! what's an azure swoon?
Can swoons be azure?

Aristotle. Ay—as moons are blue.
Be sure the Beautiful is still the True.
Take then Penelope's appeal to you:
"Come, come, Ulysses! Burn back through the world!
Come, take the broad seas in one mighty leap!"

Odysseus. Moving, no doubt; but most improbable.
No; I can answer, positive and flat,
Penelope would never have said that;
Penelope, whatever her faults might be,
Was always eminently sensible.
This high-toned style, these phrases picturesque,
They savour something of the writing-desk.
Now, e'en in Homer (and you've heard me state
That Homer sometimes was inaccurate),
When we'd a plain unvarnished thing to say
We said it in a plain unvarnished way.

Aristotle. That was in Epic; this is in a play.
I've said, when making in a bygone age
Critiques (since published) of th' Athenian stage,
That when a man a tragedy would write
Pity and Terror he must still excite;
Some do this by the plot, and some prefer
To do it by the play of character;
While others entertain the firm conviction
Terror and Pity should be roused by diction.
This latter, I'm informed, is now the fashion—
And, on the whole, it does arouse compassion.

READERS of *M.A.P.* have been enthralled by the full and vivid story of the Humbert frauds which have appeared in that paper from the pen of Mr. T. P. O'Connor. These articles are now to be collected in a volume which will be issued in a few days.

For a hundred of our readers who know the Foundling Hospital in Guilford Street, it may be that not ten have heard of its early offshoot and architectural replica (replica is rather too strong a word) at Ackworth, in Yorkshire. In 1779 this unsuccessful branch of Captain Coram's charity became a great Quaker seminary, and such it has remained for a century and a quarter. Its scholars have not swelled the ranks of literature to an extent that would appear very striking if set down on paper, but among them was Jeremiah Holme Wiffen, the translator of Tasso, William Howitt, and others. John Bright was also a scholar. In the first hundred years of its existence the stern Quaker rule, "which doth the human cool," could not have been specially favourable to the development of literary talent, answering as it did to a similar greyness in the homes and entire environment of its scholars. But to-day, Ackworth School is a very enlightened spot, where fine libraries, music, and tolerance favour the seeds of active culture. Its headmaster, Mr. Frederick Andrews, has just completed twenty-five years of office, and he received the other day a warm-hearted recognition from a thousand old pupils of his success as an educator and his worth as a guide and friend. It has been under his rule that Ackworth has emerged from the old order, under which it produced character and efficiency, into the new order under which it adds to these the graces and amenities of life.

A NEW edition of Poe is soon to appear under the editorship of Prof. C. F. Richardson. The edition will be issued by Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, the original publishers of Poe's "The Raven, and other Poems" in 1845, "Tales" in the same year, and "Eureka" in 1848. Poe's writings will for the first time be arranged in chronological order, under the heads of Poems, Tales, Criticisms, and Miscellany. Although Poe has undoubtedly suffered by the unwise perpetuation of merely perfunctory and ephemeral writing, which it is now too late to exclude from his collected works, it has seemed proper to give in this edition all the poems of the 1827 volume; "The Journal of Julius Rodman," and some hitherto uncollected passages from the article on "The Rationale of Verse" as it originally appeared.

UNDER the title of *The Service*, Mr. Godspeed, the Boston publisher, has issued a hitherto unpublished essay by Thoreau. This essay, we are informed by the *New York Journal*, was written about 1846 and sent to Margaret Fuller, then editor of *The Dial*, who after a second reading rejected it. In refusing this essay, Miss Fuller wrote Thoreau that the paper was rich in thought, but "The thoughts seem to me so out of their natural order that I cannot read it through without pain. I never once feel myself in a stream of thought, but seem to hear the grating of tools on the mosaic." The subject of *The Service* is human life. In it Thoreau dwells upon the qualifications of the good recruit, describing the brave man, the elder son of creation; and contrasting his qualifications and abilities with those of the cowardly man. He thinks there is no ill which may not be swept away like darkness by letting in a stronger light. Nature does not sympathise with our sorrows. The following extracts from the essay will interest:—

The brave man is the elder son of creation, who has stept buoyantly into his inheritance, while the coward, who is the younger, waiteth patiently till he decease. He rides as wide of this earth's gravity as a star, and by yielding incessantly to all the impulses of the soul is constantly drawn upward and becomes a fixed star. His bravery deals not so much in resolute action as healthy and assured rest; its palmy state is a staying at home and compelling alliance in all directions. So stands his life to heaven, as some fair sunlit tree against the western

horizon, and by sunrise is planted on some eastern hill, to glisten in the first rays of the dawn.

The coward wants resolution, which the brave man can do without. He recognizes no faith but a creed, thinking this straw, by which he is moored, does him good service because his sheet-anchor does not drag. "The house-roof fights with the rain; he who is under shelter does not know it." In his religion the ligature, which should be muscle and sinew, is rather like that thread which the accomplices of Cylon held in their hands when they went abroad from the temple of Minerva—the other end being attached to the statue of the goddess. But frequently, as in their case, the thread breaks, being stretched; and he is left without an asylum.

Nature refuses to sympathise with our sorrow; she has not provided for, but by a thousand contrivances against, it; she has bevelled the margin of the eyelids that the tears may not overflow on the cheeks. It was a conceit of Plutarch, accounting for the preference given to signs observed on the left hand, that men may have thought "things terrestrial and mortal directly over against heavenly and divine things, and do conjecture that the things which to us are on the left hand, the gods send down from their right hand." If we are not blind, we shall see how a right hand is stretched over all—as well the unlucky as the lucky—and that the ordering Soul is only right-handed, distributing with one palm all our fates.

There is no ill which may not be dissipated like the dark, if you let in a stronger light upon it. Overcome evil with good. Practice no such narrow economy as they whose bravery amounts to no more light than a farthing candle, before which most objects cast a shadow wider than themselves.

Bibliographical.

THE news that the *Quarterly Review*, hitherto the most conservative of publications, will have, in its immediately forthcoming number, a signed article, has naturally spread like wildfire in literary circles. Of course, we all know that for a long time past there has been no secrecy about the authorship of notable articles either in the *Quarterly* or in the *Edinburgh*. The facts got about in private conversation, or were boldly set forth in the newspapers. Secrecy in these matters is practically impossible nowadays, and the editor and publisher of the *Quarterly* have done wisely in accepting the inevitable. They have made a good beginning. Their first signed article is from the pen of Mr. Swinburne, who would seem, at first sight, to be a little out of place in a Tory periodical. But then, he writes on a literary subject—the subject of Charles Dickens. It may not be generally known, but is nevertheless true, that on this topic Mr. Swinburne is an expert, his knowledge of Dickens's writings being comprehensive and minute. There is no point, however small, in the plots and characterization of Dickens on which Mr. Swinburne could not pronounce at once and with accuracy. He has lately been writing an "appreciation" of *Oliver Twist* for the elaborate American edition of Dickens lately announced, and that, no doubt, is what has led to his choice of subject for the *Quarterly* article. That essay should have special interest for one of Dickens's recent editors and critics. Mr. Swinburne, we all know, can be very incisive when giving expression to strong feeling, and I understand that in this instance he indulges in some plain speaking.

We are promised a complete and final edition of the "poems" of Walt Whitman—an edition which will contain hitherto unpublished matter. There was a reprint of *Leaves of Grass* so recently as 1900. This had been preceded by reprints in 1898, 1892, and 1881 (a copyright

edition). A selection from *Leaves of Grass* was brought out by Mr. Ernest Rhys in 1886, to which year belongs a selection from Whitman's "poems" made by Mr. W. M. Rossetti. Another selection, by Mr. Arthur Stedman, came out in 1892. Then we had *Specimen Days* in 1883 and 1887, *November Boughs* in 1888, and *Goodbye My Fancy* in 1891. *Gems from Whitman* came to us from America in 1889. Perhaps the volumes most representative of Whitman's "verse" were those published by Putnam in 1896 (at 2s.) and in 1899 (at 3s. 6d.). The former of these editions was, I think, in a paper cover "for the people." Last year we had the essay and selection by Mr. Edmond Holmes. Perhaps I may be allowed to say, for myself, that I think we have had, on the whole, more than enough of Walt Whitman.

It is said that Mr. T. W. Higginson has some fresh matter in the way of correspondence to introduce into his promised volume on Longfellow. Were this not so, there would be little excuse for the production of the book, for in the matter of memoirs of Longfellow we are already very well off. To begin with, there are the two volumes of *Life and Journals* published in 1886, and the supplementary one published in 1887. This is the authoritative and standard work. Mr. Eric Robertson wrote a monograph for the "Great Writers" series, the best feature of the book being the bibliography by Mr. J. P. Anderson. Then there was the tribute by R. H. Stoddard in 1882, and *A Book about Longfellow*, by J. N. McIlwraith, came out two years ago. On the whole, the poet, who had a very uneventful life, may be said to have been sufficiently "biographed."

To my list of reprints, during the past twenty years, of Douglas Jerrold's writings, his grandson, Mr. Walter Jerrold, adds: *Tales* ("now first collected" in the "Treasure-House of Tales" series), *The Handbook of Swindling and Other Papers* (1891), *The Man Made of Money* (1892), and *Popular Tales* (including *Men of Character*) (about the same date). Mr. Walter Jerrold goes on to say:—"While I cordially agree with you in what you say as to much of my grandfather's dramatic writing, I may perhaps say that I have so far found no publisher sufficiently temerarious to put the matter to the proof. I should add, though, that nearly thirty of Douglas Jerrold's plays—or close upon half of those which he wrote—are obtainable in Dicks' Penny Series."

Mr. Walter Jerrold, by the way, is said to be writing, or to have written, a monograph on Mr. George Meredith for Messrs. Greening's series on contemporary writers. I suppose the book will be biographical in the main. There is already in existence a volume which may be regarded as a useful collection of Meredithiana—*George Meredith: Some Characteristics*, by Mr. Le Gallienne (1890, fifth and revised edition in 1900), which is made valuable by the bibliography compiled by Mr. Lane, and the note by Mr. Fullerton on Mr. Meredith's vogue in America. On the whole, there should be room for a "popular" account of Mr. Meredith and his works.

With reference to what I said the other day about Charles Cotton and the anthologies, a courteous correspondent reminds me that that worthy was represented in the original edition (1843) of *Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature*, and has been represented in all subsequent editions and reprints of that work. That is so; but a cyclopædia is not an anthology. Writers may very well figure in books of reference, and yet not be worthy to figure in careful selections of verse. My correspondent adds that one of Cotton's songs is in Mr. Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book of English Verse*. I venture to think, however, that that volume contains a good deal that might have been omitted with advantage.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

A Writers' Writer.

William Hazlitt. By Augustine Birrell. ("English Men of Letters": Macmillan. 2s. net.)

NONCONFORMITY, liberalism, a burly charity, a practical wit, and a real gusto of sympathy qualified Mr. Birrell to deal with Hazlitt's life of brilliant but errant accomplishment. And we have not been disappointed. We have read this book through in a single sitting, delighted by its easy yet careful narrative, its sane and kindly comment, and last, not least, by its wealth of quotation.

In this last particular Mr. Birrell has shown a sound sense. He knew that to write about Hazlitt properly one must freely quote him, and he has made no bones about breaking the tradition of a series of monographs in which quotations have been far too consistently tabooed. That Mr. Birrell felt the departure is amusingly indicated by his prefatory apology on page 21 for a quotation that fills nearly two pages. But, hardened in acceptable sin, he presently introduces sixteen solid pages of Hazlitt with no more fuss than is contained in the sentence: "The rest must follow in Hazlitt's own words." It is Hazlitt's account of Coleridge, first printed in the *Examiner* in 1817, that Mr. Birrell thus empties into his pages, and when the reader emerges drenched and braced and bright of eye from the superb and rushing stream he is baptised anew into all Hazlitt. Like the scholar in Chaucer, whom Hazlitt mentions, he goes—

Sounding on his way.

That way is made pungently pleasant, and as we have little sympathy with the reader who does not hasten to possess himself of this book we shall make no attempt to follow Mr. Birrell's story of Hazlitt through a life of glorious fret. For there was something glorious about this man of letters, not always as he can be seen from without, but as seen by sympathy through his own glowing eyes. Lover of man and fighter of men, his last words were "Well, I've had a happy life." One likes to think how Charles Lamb, who heard them in that sick room at Number 6, Frith Street, must have found them answering to a hundred memories as he returned in utter sadness to Enfield. And we, who have Hazlitt's writings before us (his autobiography in solution) may ask ourselves whether any other writer has recorded so many fine moments in personal experience.

These memory-making moments came not so much of fruitful thoroughness in living, as of the man's sheer appetite for life, his joy of biting into the thing that for the time being interested him. He failed as a metaphysician; his *Essay in Defence of the Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*, to which he had given years of brooding and misplaced hope, attracted no attention—yet he has put a psalm of praise into the mouth of every philosopher: "There are moments in the life of a solitary thinker, which are to him what the evening of some great victory is to the conqueror and hero . . ." He battered the doors of Art with prayers, and was not admitted: yet he has made those doors more alluring for ever. Of his very laboured "Head of an Old Woman," he tells us: "The picture was never finished, and I might have gone on with it to the present hour. I used to set it on the ground when my day's work was done, and saw revealed to me, with swimming eyes, the birth of new hopes and of a new world of objects . . ." The humblest painter is a true scholar; and the best of scholars—the scholar of Nature.

Hazlitt's first meeting with a friend, first reading of a favourite book, first sight of a painting, first listening to a fine speaker, are the things he never forgets or

ceases to communicate. "It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken." . . . "When I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France, Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity." . . . "It was in January 1798 that I rose one morning before daylight to walk ten miles in the mud to hear this celebrated preacher. When I got there the organ was playing the 100th Psalm; and when it was done Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, 'And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE.' As he gave out the text his voice rose 'with a stream of rich distilled perfumes,' and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe." Such things made Hazlitt's a happy life.

He was not unconscious of the dangers to which his appetite for life exposed him. His failure in art led him into some wise reflections:—

The brooding over excellence with a feverish importunity, and stimulating ourselves to great things by an abstract love of fame, can do little good, and may do much harm. It is, no doubt, a very delightful and enviable state of mind to be in, but neither a very arduous nor a very profitable one. Nothing remarkable was ever done, except by following up the impulse of our own minds, by grappling with difficulties and improving our advantages, not by dreaming over our own premature triumphs, or doting on the achievements of others.

He learnt to apply this lesson in some directions, but not in all. The zeal of his house was always eating him up. To his life's end he was beset with hatreds and vexations of spirit. Why? "A life freer from greed of gain," says Mr. Birrell, "is not to be found in the records of English literature. But he was always desperately in earnest; and found it not only hard, but plainly impossible, to put his political and philosophical convictions good-humouredly aside on occasions and be, for a season, all things to all men. . . . At the bottom of his mind lay a deep, gloomy pool of metaphysics, and into this pool he plunged from time to time, always emerging more than ever in love with abstract propositions and the hard core of thought. He led a lonely life, thinking, thinking, thinking, and the more he thought the darker grew the welkin." Wondering why he was disliked, and feeling thwarted and deserted, he fell back on the countless fragments of life which were really his own, and thus became for us, and perhaps for the men of all time, a great miscellaneous writer.

On the whole, no writer has been better understood from the first. An Edinburgh reviewer of his day pointed out that with all his riches of feeling, idea, and insight, he lacked "leading principles of taste to give simpleness to his aims or any central points in his mind, around which his feelings might revolve and his imaginations cluster." As penetrating is a remark of a *Scotsman* reviewer of 1818, indeed it can hardly be bettered: "It is no ordinary matter to peruse a book of Mr. Hazlitt's. There is a certain *hurry of the spirit*, which never fails to accompany the fine show of reason and taste under which the mind is hardly at leisure to select beauties or start objections." This hurry of the spirit has much to do with Hazlitt's position as an essayist. It for ever separates him from Lamb even where, as is very frequently the case, they are writing on the same subjects with the same enjoyment. Lamb's spirit did not hurry. It was at peace, and all his

whims and surprises moved in the visible and gracious boundaries of his nature. To take up Lamb is like entering an old church, known in childhood, known in youth, known all through life, where cool shapes are still the same, where the whole is loyal to the impression it first created. To be in such a place is to hold a session of all the feelings and memories which make a man what he is to himself. The most miscellaneous and sudden ideas take on harmony, assurance; for though we are moved, surprised, interested, quickened, we are conscious of the sweet familiar bounds of the building. We know there is no jagged rent in the walls, no lurking discords in dim corners. Such is Lamb, but such is not Hazlitt. In Hazlitt's pages we feel the shifty winds of the world, and are kept alert by uncertainties and asperities which go free and injurious. We encounter all weathers; we are captured, but not at home.

Mr. Birrell, however, says that we have no right to complain. "Of the miscellaneous writer one does not demand settled principles of taste or deep searching criticism; it is enough if he at once arrests and throughout maintains our attention; if he hurries our sluggish spirit up and down animated pages; if he is never vapid, or humdrum, or foolish, or blatant, or self-satisfied; if he forces us to forget ourselves; and by renewing our delight in books, poetry, plays, pictures, and in the humours and emotions of life, makes us feel that it was really worth our while not only to have learned to read, but to have gone on reading ever since." This is true so far as it goes, but when a miscellaneous writer is as good as Hazlitt, he comes within a zone in which it is inevitable that we should inquire why he is not as good as Lamb. And the answer in Hazlitt's case is that he had not in the absolute sense "settled principles of taste or deep searching criticism." His mere abundance of both, his cataract of ideas, and the gusto with which he wrote on everything have nevertheless given him a unique place. This is defined by Mr. Birrell:—

Hazlitt's success in circulating his opinions is largely attributable to the fact that, like his sworn admirer in our own day, Mr. Bagehot, he has always been a favourite author with journalists and ready-writers. His views are infectious, his style attractive, and his works very quotable with or without acknowledgment. Indeed, it is very hard always to remember when you are quoting Hazlitt. No more original miscellaneous writer can be named than this same Mr. Bagehot, and yet he occasionally gives you half a page of Hazlitt without a word said about it. Compare Bagehot's description of Southey in his essay on "Shakespeare" (*Literary Studies* i., 137), with Hazlitt's sketch of Southey in *The Spirit of the Age*, and what I mean will be made plain. Gracious rills from the Hazlitt watershed have flowed in all directions, fertilising a dry and thirsty land. You can mark this track as, to quote Cowper's beautiful lines about real rills, they

"lose themselves at length
In matted grass that with a lovelier green
Betrays the secret of their silent course."

We leave our readers the pleasure of acquainting themselves with Mr. Birrell's narrative pages, and his firm, wise, and kindly treatment of those things in Hazlitt's life which were not convenient. One doubt we take leave to utter. We cannot easily believe that, as suggested by Stevenson's biographer, R. L. S. was deterred from writing the life of Hazlitt by the *Liber Amoris* episode. That does not square with our ideas of Stevenson and his attitude to human frailty, nor with what we imagine his feelings would be towards a man whose writings, as Mr. Birrell well puts it, "are chiefly remarkable for the fierce enjoyment they exhibit for all brave, sublunary things." Mr. Birrell has found Hazlitt's folly a disagreeable, but not difficult, subject to handle. In any case Charles Lamb's judgment has never been in peril: that Hazlitt was "in his natural and healthy state one of the finest and wisest spirits breathing."

A Record of a Temperament.

The Life of John William Walshe, F.S.A. Edited, with an Introduction, by Montgomerie Carmichael, author of "In Tuscany." (Murray. 6s. net.)

THE letters "F.S.A." after the name of Walshe upon this title-page ought, perhaps, to give the hint that here is not a biography but a book of fiction; and, to the wise reader, this hint will not lessen but rather increase the authenticity and intimacy of the revelation. The author who wears a domino is likely enough to be equipped for self-revelations; and so here, in losing biography, we may hope for autobiography in its place. Not that anybody need tie the "editor" to his facts or his incidents; there need be none of that dull business of identification which goes on whenever a work has really got the breath of life; but the thought, the opinion, the sentiment, the whim even, we can accept as the veritable mental and spiritual experience of a veiled author. In this sense Mr. Carmichael has produced what is really a human document, though it does not bear his signature. The book is veritably what so many books merely aim at being, a record of temperament throughout; and is, in fact, so frank and so overwhelming in its individualism that no one could have written it of another: not even the legendary Philip Walshe of his own father, W. J. Walshe, united as father and son supposititiously were. You cannot read this work of fiction without coming to the conclusion that it is too intimately true to be biography—to be, in fact, second-hand.

The son of a Manchester merchant, noted for good manners on the Manchester Exchange, where he was nick-named "the Duke," John William Walshe was never at home in his environment. Literature began to be his complementary life when, at the age of eight, he discovered the *Pilgrim's Progress*. That was a month of Paradise, easily gained, some might say, in comparison with Christian's; yet how they would missay who do not know the real Paradise of the reader is reached, not by the mere act of reading, but by the long preparation, the many an immolation, and by the bringing from his own storehouse the hard-earned experiences which alone may vitalize for him the written word. "What thinkest thou?" said Virgil to Dante, and says every author to his reader: a partnership in which, if you come to think of it, the labours are not really so one-sided as at first sight they seem. The boy Walshe was ready for the message of Bunyan. It got into his blood—the blood that literally he was called upon to shed. That was a little later when he went from an unsympathetic home to an unsympathetic school—the Searle House Grammar School in Yorkshire. The headmaster had been warned that there was much nonsense to be knocked out of the new little boy; and the knocking part of the process was duly and devilishly performed. One memorable Sunday afternoon he rambled up to an old brick building, which had served the Friends as a meeting-house ere that sect died out at Searle, and now bore above the lintel the legend "Primitive Methodist Chapel." As if drawn by some magnetic influence he entered; he fell upon his knees; he remembered William Law, whose *Serious Call* he had read; he remembered his solitary childish searching after the religious life, and he fell on his knees weeping to the chorus of "Hallelujah" which surged through the chapel in thanksgiving over a brother who thus early had found salvation. The boy repeated his visits and went back to school in an ecstasy. After one blessed morning in Zion Chapel he was met with "Headmaster wants you in the study, you young sneak." "Now, sir, where have you been?" asked the Rev. John Joule in his harshest tones. The boy, who was about to tell the story simply, "suddenly felt the hopeless impossibility of being understood." The six cuts given his hand for his stubbornness sealed his tongue the tighter. Twelve cuts followed.

"Now perhaps, you'll say what nameless wickedness you've been engaged in. Oh, you won't, won't you?" He gripped the boy by the collar and beat his tender body blindly. The boy fell on his knees, faint and dizzy. "Jesus, Jesus, for Thy dear sake," he was saying all the time. The birchings were repeated, day by day, till the red blood flowed; and then there followed the infirmary; and an announced expulsion which was averted by the matron's discovery of the boy's real whereabouts during his absence. The Hon. and Rev. Vicar was amazed at this early evidence of human corruption, and the windows of the Methodist Chapel were broken by the church militant among Walshe's schoolfellows. But Walshe stayed at school, had a friend in the classical master, and gained the love of Latin which was to be his master mental-passion through life.

His father's Manchester office meant misery for the youth; and, with a few pounds—which he had been saving for a second-hand copy of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—he became a runaway. The voyage from Liverpool to Leghorn was eased by readings from the Bible and the *Imitation*. That is a stage of youth in which death has no terrors: the thought of it is elation. But it was life that awaited Walshe, whose dreams were made true by a fellow countryman in Italy who took him under his own roof, and thus placed him in the environment in which at last, root and branch, he came to flower. This part of the book reads like a wishing game: nay, the youth "pretending" could not have pretended to such good purpose as his new life realised. Browning is not the only great modern who has said that wishes are translated into facts, and who began to be afraid of his wants unless he was ready to see them made supplies: all which is merely to express afresh the old formula that the prayer of the heart is heard. New formulas were not, however, those in favour with Walshe. He loved the liturgy of the Church—of which he became a devout member. His old passion for Latin made him happy inside the village sanctuary: in the dead language he found a life which all modern tongues lacked. We need not follow him in his austerities; in that studentship of St. Francis and his Order which, in the mock-real narrative of Mr. Carmichael, "made him well-known to scholars as perhaps the greatest living authority on matters Franciscan." He lived for thirty-five years at Assisi, and there died in the July of 1900. His love-affair seems but an interlude; the real song of his soul was the praise of Francis of Assisi. His zest for heraldry; the little vanity that sprang from the possibilities of his own pedigree; his sense of logic, and the sword-thrusts it enabled him to give to worldlings, he all the while standing beside with his healing balms for those whom his thrusts wounded; his treasury of manuscripts, and his constant jubulations of spirit—all these things find space in a record made with so fine an art that it conciliates where it cannot convince and captivates where it does not persuade.

Black and White.

Up from Slavery, An Autobiography. By Booker T. Washington. (Grant Richards. 6s.)

MR. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON may place "Professor" in front of his name, and "M.A. Harvard" behind it; he has dined with the President at the White House, to the astonishment of the Southern States; he has received the courteous attention of the United States Ambassador in London, he has been the guest of Queen Victoria. Yet in some of the United States he is not permitted to travel by railway except in the baggage car. For three-and-a-half decades ago Booker—it was the only name he knew then—was running hatless and shoeless about, looking to the "big house" for the Sunday morning molasses, and

unable to call his body or his soul his own. In this modestly and humorously written story of all that lay between the slave-hut and the White House you may find the problem that America has been trying to solve ever since she discovered the big mistake of slavery, the problem of dealing, legally and socially, with a black race which touches the constitution and society at every point. The black race was fortunate in producing at the right moment a coloured man of talent, a man who saw the needs of these children among the nations and set himself to supply them. He saw them very early by some sort of inspiration, long before the logical faculty was developed in him. And your reading of this struggle upwards from slave-hut to the plaudits of Harvard will not be without emotion.

Booker was born a slave, his mother—deeply loved and carefully tended to the last—was a negress, his father merely a white hypothesis. Among his earliest memories are those of his mother praying over him for emancipation. He remembers the Emancipation proclamation at the "big house" by a United States officer, the tears of joy his mother shed, the general exodus of negroes for a week's holiday in order to realise that they were really free. This too he remembers of the anxiety of the freed slaves as to their future—with children and wives to support:—

Gradually, one by one, stealthily at first, the older slaves began to wander from the slave quarters back to the "big house" to have a whispered conversation with their former owners as to the future.

The emancipated slaves were mere children turned out into the world helpless, and like all children they wanted to be "grown-ups" at once, to be preachers, teachers, and congressmen before they had learned the elements of free and civilised life. But young Booker was an exception. He felt that he was a long way behind, and—this was the important thing—had to walk every step of the interval and walk it quicker than the white boy. Fired by a companion who knew his letters Booker managed to get to school. But he had to work as well for his living, and the furnace hands did not knock off till nine, the hour at which school began. Little Booker found that he could not get to the school till his class had recited.

There was a large clock in a little office in the furnace. This clock, of course, all the hundred or more workmen depended upon to regulate their hours of beginning and ending the day's work. I got the idea that the way for me to reach school on time was to move the clock hands from half past eight up to the nine o'clock mark. This I found myself doing morning after morning, till the furnace "boss" discovered that something was wrong, and locked the clock in a case. I did not mean to inconvenience anybody. I simply meant to reach that school-house on time.

At the school-house he found that boys actually wore hats and had more than one name. The hat question was difficult; but agility of mind supplied the missing name, and Booker named himself on the spur of the moment after the father of his country. Finally young Booker managed to reach the Hampton Institute at which certain philanthropists were trying to educate the negro, and having passed an examination in sweeping a room under the eye of a Yankee woman who knew just where to look for dirt he became a student, paying for his education by the labour of his hands. With an education within his reach and a firm purpose in his head young Booker went straight ahead, though the financial question was always difficult.

Prof. Washington's great life work has been the development of the negro school at Tuskegee in the Black Belt of the South, which began one and twenty years ago in a stable and a hen-house, and to-day is a vast institution with huge buildings and an imposing staff of teachers. Before the rise of Tuskegee, through the energy and financial skill of Prof. Washington, the young negro

in the Black Belt had small chance of an education. There were black teachers who could write their names; but they could do little more. One who was asked on his application for a post how he would teach the children on the subject of the earth's shape, replied that "he was prepared to teach that the earth was either flat or round, according to the preference of a majority of his patrons." But while the history of the rise of Tuskegee is intensely interesting, one turns at last and again to Prof. Washington's view of the relations of the black to the white in the country where they are technically and politically equal and socially apart. The appearance of such a negro as this does not solve the problem, but sets another. Few white men can read this book and honestly say that the writer of it is an inferior. Yet his red Indian pupil is accorded the white man's privileges on steamboat and in hotel, while the dark teacher suffers the penalty of his race. The difference, indeed, is racial, not social. Prof. Washington has seen that, and he has a deep and almost pathetic sympathy with the American prejudice against a mixture of races. In South Africa such mixture is an ideal. In America—well, there it is the only impossible solution of the great problem. There remains then a development side by side, and here Prof. Washington has laid down lines which white and black may be willing to follow. He saw the difficulty early. He saw how half-educated black men swarmed to Washington with demands for small government appointments, how girls whose mothers were laundresses came out from the public schools in gorgeous hats and went to the bad. And his method—carried out at Tuskegee—was to teach the black to work with his hands as well as to think with his head and thus to begin the slow ascent after the white man who has had some centuries start. Prof. Washington's solution of the problem was given in his speech at the Atlanta Exhibition—the first time a negro spoke beside white men on a Southern platform, and it was received with enthusiasm throughout the States. One luminous passage we select:—

It is right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.

And as the speaker held up his hand with the fingers spread he spoke a sentence which will probably remain among the historic phrases:—

In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

There is no other solution possible for the problem. America has set herself, and no other negro, we suspect, who could give it such striking expression.

A Book of Essays.

Horae Solitariae. By Edward Thomas. (Duckworth. 2s. 6d. net.)

If the bindings and gilt lettering of books can strike a bliss upon a quiet hour, much more can a legible title. A title should be nothing less than an *aperitif*; in some cases it may become the meal. Mr. Thomas possesses a little book which apparently he does not read, but of which the title, *Horae Solitariae*, nourishes his soul. A good title, certainly. Mr. Thomas has been told that *Horae Solitariae* is dull by one explorer, and theological by another. The division of labour is amusing. It was born in Blackfriars what time Dr. Johnson was reaping applause from his Dictionary and sowing it in his *Lives of the Poets*. It was printed by J. W. Pasham, Black-Friars, and sold in the Poultry by the Dillys, and by James Mathews in the Strand, and its date is 1776. That is almost all that Mr.

Thomas has to say about *Horae Solitariae*, but his own *horae solitariae* are pervaded by the spirit and aroma of this significant title on his shelf. Its influence, he tells us, is "on the side of quietness and well-buttered toast."

And so, as the reader guesses, we slip into a book of quiet essays touching on books, nature, and gentle characters. "Inns and Books," "The Passing of Pan," "Recollections of November," "Caryatids," and "On the Evenlode" make one-third of the cues to Mr. Thomas's whimsies of comment and observation. The whimsicality is teased now and then, as when Mr. Thomas, in complaining that he rarely finds the right book in an inn, makes such a distinction as: "I have put up with Shakespeare where the ale, the signboard, and the host wanted Massinger." This is a niceness that leaves Lamb far behind. The right book to find in an inn, Mr. Thomas thinks, is an odd volume of Richardson or Sterne. Against such decrees who would protest? Yet his "best fortune" was to fall in with a volume called *The Unknown Way*, "left behind by some tired reviewer." We suggest, however, that the reviewer had done his duty, and had left the book as bread upon the waters. Mr. Thomas makes us grateful to him for his quotations. From a volume of old letters, labelled *Folios Mandata*, he culls a fragment that diffuses we know not what fine mustiness, as of lives once delicate and vivid. Read it:—

This day the wayes were too foule for the mare (that now goeth faster than I towards age) I did walk to the minster. Marian and Jannet and my good wife Ann did accompany mee, but fell behind by reason of much greating with the neighbours, and I was presently alone in Master Jeffreys his high grove of great trees. As thou art my dear friend I do confess and I am yet upon the tenters for it, that I did there take delight in a kind of phantastick melancholia that was like a warme bedde on a cold morning so as I was loth to give it up. If I may beleeeve mine eyes that bee little dimmed, the great trees were of the hew of alchymy and brave and wanton as a shoppe in Chepe. I do beleeeve I came nigh to that sinne of His People in the wilderness that they sinned as Scripture hath it in bowing down before the Golden Calf. Hadde I met my lord Bishop I think hee hadde seene the hoofes of the devill in my visnomy. But my wife suddenly coming on to me and asking whether the stone annoied me yet? I did forgette this trumperie. Pray for mee, as thou art my deare friend and brother.

Is not this exquisite as a revelation of the stirrings of the joyous human animal under broadcloth, amid Sunday's drowsy decorums? And the finer for the hundred-fold oblivion that wraps the decent man who wrote it? Truly there have been good men in the world, not righteous over-much.

It is when he is stringing such gems on a thread of nice comment that Mr. Thomas is at his best. He is steeped in choice reading, and loves the words that are all but Latin or all but Greek. He calls his books the "peltasts" and "hoplites" of his *horae solitariae*. "Revenant" is one of his recurrent words; and "altisonant," "ensepulchred," and "caret" give you no surprise. But these rather lapidary words are not, we think, possessed by Mr. Thomas with that complete ownership which is complete sanction. At least, we are tempted to doubt it by his occasional lapses into an opposite strain. He can write of angling: "We were casting all the time mechanically, dreamily." Mechanically is a vile word, and to yoke it with dreamily! Mr. Thomas's style is not that entity which a style ought to be; we expect fine words in it, but are sometimes fidgetted by their approach as if they were to spring out on us with a "Bo!" We cannot admire a sentence like this: "the lawn, level as a pond, was exquisitely damasked by daisies and buttercups," or this: "The buds were full of prelusive dark sayings about the approaching night." In such sentences the fine word seems to have been thought

of first, and "hanked in." A sense of derivativeness haunts one at times.

A dim solitude thus circumscribed liked us hugely. We loved not the insolent and importunate splendours of perfect light. Cobwebs and wholesome dust—we needed some of both in the corners of our minds. They mature the wine of the spirit perhaps. We would always have had, as it were, a topmost and nearly inaccessible file of tomes, which we never read, but often planned to read—records peradventure of unvictorious alchemist and astrologer. Thither a sunbeam never penetrated and unmasked. The savour of paraffin and brick dust should never cling about it. Unfortunate (one thought) is he who has no dusty and never-explored recesses in his mind.

Surely the Elian ring of these sentences will strike most readers. Only Elia would never have written of "the insolent and importunate splendours of perfect light." Perfect light cannot be insolent or importunate; it is ineffable. Elia might have denounced the insolent and importunate splendour of an arc lamp. Mr. Thomas's landscapes are rather too still and humid for our taste. Their dropped winds, immense silences, and creeping mists suggest the landscapes of "Christabel," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," and "Ulalume." Yet the effect is often good of its kind:—

But to-night, as I take the self-same walk, under the flying rays of a majestic sunset, the gray and silent landscape of few trees and many houses seems a deserted camp (which I startle when I tread among the fallen leaves), or a Canaan from which the happy savage, childhood, has been banished. High up on a blank wall lingers one pure white rose. White with cold, and fluttering as if the powerful wind might blow them out, a few stars shine. Far away the leafless branches of an elm grove look like old print against the sky.

We hope we have not been peevishly critical; but there is no half-tasting an essay. Either you gulp it, and idly pronounce it passable; or, seeking its utmost flavours, good and bad, you report them all.

In the Baconian Camp.

The Mystery of William Shakespeare. By His Honour Judge Webb. (Longmans.)

THIS is yet another Baconian treatise. It claims to be "a summary of evidence," but it is the summary of a prosecuting counsel rather than of a judge, and affords a fresh example of the difficulty with which the legal mind adapts itself to the unfamiliar subject-matter and methods of literary criticism. The author has got up his brief thoroughly and presents it in an eminently lucid fashion; but his knowledge of the data on which a decision must be arrived at seems to be largely of a second-hand nature, and he makes a dialectic use of isolated opinions of Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Sidney Lee, Halliwell-Phillips, and other Shakespearean "authorities," which is wholly forensic and frequently misleading. To go into the constant misinterpretations of evidence which our pencil has marked on page after page of this book would require more space and more labour than we propose to waste upon any Baconian. A very few examples will suffice to give a notion of the quality of the literary judgment employed. One of the fatal difficulties of the Baconians is the definite testimony borne by Camden, the intimate friend of Ben Jonson, to the fact that the Shakespeare who lies buried at Stratford is also the Shakespeare who wrote the plays. Says he:—

In the chancel lies William Shakespeare, a native of this place, who has given ample proof of his genius and great abilities in the forty-eight plays he has left behind him.

And Judge Webb supposes that he counters this evidence by the observation that the remark "shows how little Camden knew of the real author." It certainly shows how little Camden knew of any real author other than Shakespeare, and it as certainly disposes of the further statement which Judge Webb proceeds to make on the same page that "not one of the literary men with whom London abounded in the time of Shakespeare" can be adduced as attesting the responsibility of the Player for the works which are associated with his name. For a measure of Judge Webb's understanding of Elizabethan English, take the following point. He quotes four lines from the *Sonnets*:—

Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep Invention in a noted weed,
Till every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they do proceed?

Whereon he comments: "Here the author certainly intimates that Shakespeare was not his real name, and that he was fearful lest his real name should be discovered," and he returns to the argument at intervals during the book, even finding a "parallel" in the fact that in one place Bacon says that his head was "wholly employed about Invention," and in another that someone or other "clad himself like a hermit, and in that weed wandered about the country." Of course there is nothing about concealment in the sonnet. "Invention" is "Imagination" and "a noted weed" is a style, the garb of imagination, which has the writer's "note" or stamp upon it, so that a glance at the words is enough to name him by.

Even more amazing is the Judge's ear for rhythm. After quoting a passage from Bacon's *Natural History* he makes the sudden suggestion that "this apparently prosaic prose is in reality good blank verse, and if we try the sea-shell to the ear we shall detect the murmur of the sea." Here is the "good blank verse" which the sea murmurs:—

The process
Of nature still will be, as I conceive,
Not that the herb you work upon should draw
The juice of [f] the foreign herb, for that opinion
We [ha]ve formerly rejected, but that there will be
A new confect[i]on of mould, which perhaps will alter
The seed, and yet not to the kind
Of the former herb.

Judge Webb is anxious to make it clear that he is not Mrs. Gallup:—

In these pages it is not proposed to prove that Bacon was a Rosicrucian; or that he was the son of Queen Elizabeth; or that he was the Shakespeare Messiah; or that he was the author of the Plays of Marlowe and the Essays of Montaigne. It is merely proposed to examine the arguments that go to show that he was Shakespeare.

These distinctions are too fine for us. We fail to see that the propositions which Judge Webb repudiates are a whit more absurd than that which he champions.

Other New Books.

The Bath Road. By Francis Neilson. (Macqueen.)

THIS is a three-act comedy, period—1800; theme—tiff between a newly-married couple, complicated by a sham elopement. The spectacle of Mrs. Margery Littledale eloping with Sir James Dawlas down the Bath Road in a coach, with Mr. Littledale on the box disguised as a coachman, is rather amusing, but it involves a too striking resemblance between Mr. Littledale and Sir James's man Wooditt; it also involves, in Act II., a singular blindness on the part of Sir James. The whole intrigue is highly complex, strained, and knotted-up. Before he had even seen her, Mr. Littledale had made a bet that he would

marry Margery; Sir James made a bet that he would elope with the prettiest bride of the season; the rest follows, by the aid of an aristocratic bully, a "fop of fashion" (whatever that is), some ladies who say the same thing over and over again, and a communicative lady's maid with the pleasing appellation of Betty Oneway. The diversion ends as it should, with a reconciliation and an understanding. Such plays as *The Bath Road*, where everything is artificial except the costume, can only succeed by witty dialogue and a continued series of ingeniously "theatrical" situations. Mr. Neilson's comic invention flags. The first act, too explanatory, is often tedious and generally clumsy. The second act is more hilarious, but it narrowly escapes rough-and-tumble farce; the third act is that expected which always happens in a comedy of intrigue. The dialogue might have been much worse than it is. The author has not made it offensively eighteenth century in its interjections and oaths; for this we should be thankful. He has a gift of neatness and restraint in writing which is all too rare in our modern dramatic literature. His wit frequently owes too much to the late Oscar Wilde, but it is passable. We like the saying of the farmer who was discussing the respective merits of pigs and birds of Paradise: "Pigs is useful when you want a bit o' pork." At the same time, we have not been able to perceive why Mr. Neilson wrote this play or why it was published. A modest and ordinary performance, it reads like a student's exercise in stage-composition. It is neither sufficiently crude for a West End success, nor sufficiently clever to make any impression upon the reading public.

Spanish Life in Town and Country. By L. Higgin. (Newnes. 3s. 6d. net.)

MRS. HIGGIN sets out with the laudable intention of correcting the many errors current in this country concerning Spain, and substituting for them some precise knowledge of the facts. To some extent she succeeds; a good deal of popular superstition goes down before her rather contemptuous onslaughts, and Spain emerges from her pages as a country much more common-place than most people suppose it to be. Yet this result by no means represents the whole truth: it is one thing to correct impressions, quite another to reconstruct them. The writer who essays to write of Spain as she is should not only understand her skeleton, but grasp her soul, and it appears to us that Mrs. Higgin has not got much further than the skeleton. To say of a book purporting to deal with facts that it lacks romance has a sound of paradox, yet it must be said of Mrs. Higgin's book. It is the romance inherent in fact which gives colour and life to history, and it is precisely in her lack of romantic suggestion that Mrs. Higgin fails. No doubt Borrow was often wrong, no doubt his Spain and her people were often, in a way, misrepresented by his too personal genius, yet certain aspects of the true Spain live in his pages as they never do in Mrs. Higgin's. Thus, although we are thankful for this careful and conscientious little book, its impression needs collating with other sources. At the same time it must be said that Mrs. Higgin has here set down much that can hardly be found elsewhere of the ordinary social life of a country by no means so backward as popular belief imagines. Spain has still a progressive spirit, and there are not wanting men to put it into action.

Mr. Eugène Street contributes a couple of excellent chapters on Portuguese life, and the book is illustrated from photographs; but as these are of the most ordinary description they hardly add to the interest or value of the volume.

A Dissertation upon Second Fiddles. By Vincent O'Sullivan. (Richards. 5s.)

THE odd and fantastic cleverness of this performance is like nothing so much as the Sterne of *Tristram Shandy*. There are the same audacious habits of delay and digression, the same persistence of banter and assiduous explanatoriness. Added is a verbal coxcombry which, if we may at once exemplify and accuse it, serves here and there to "obnubilate" the meaning craved by the "esurient" reader.

For those free spirits whose peace is proof against the most uncomfortable theories and the most dangerous paradoxes, this *Dissertation* should be a delight. It presents separately four victims of contact with human wills. That thought, unaccompanied by action, has sometimes power to depress or exalt the object thought of is a conclusion to which not merely Christian science reluctantly leads us. Even in Mr. Sullivan's sprightly pages this idea is of an eerie complexion. Yet the comedy which he evolves from it is hearty and courageous, and provocative of innocent smiles. First we have the wealthy curmudgeon whose life withers before the will of a relative impatient to inherit from him. Then we have the bold sinner who is impelled to commit the misdeeds imagined by one who is ambitious but unable to sin. Lastly confronts us the victim of the literary plagiarist whose plundering begets a fatal hate. Some of these unfortunates play second fiddle in a manner injurious to the metaphor, which implies subordination in a harmony, not total effacement. The metaphor may be considered as a foil to much writing of a plainness to glut anyone who is in love with clear words. One second fiddle, in colloquy with a first of his tribe, mentions—

that English class in which you will find a foolish and evil worship of what, in its jargon, is called "good form," whereof the result is to blur and ruin individual character; and the contemplation of this miserable and pestilent affectation leads me to the paradox that the final vulgarity is to be a gentleman.

Mr. Sullivan's book may be diagnosed in the light of that passage. His *Dissertation* is one of many symptoms which point to an emancipation of the age called "twentieth century" from all doctrinism in manners as well as in thought.

The Summer Playground. By Charles Spencer Hayward. (George Allen. 6s.)

THIS book is written with the robust enthusiasm of the man who loves games, and believes that they should be played with a seriousness little short of the seriousness belonging to life itself. Games will make friends for everyone provided they are played with keenness and good feeling; and the author is certainly right in saying that a good cricketer has a passport that will carry him anywhere in British territory. For the Englishman takes his great game with him from Pole to Pole, and teaches it to the Parsees and to the South Sea Islanders alike; and on the Continent it is firmly believed that no British victory on the battlefield would be complete without a whiskey and soda, and a cricket match. *The Summer Playground* forms one of the "Young England Library" series, and is intended largely, of course, for boys; but there is a community of interest among all sportsmen, and no sportsman is tired of hearing of the village cricket match, of the giants of the team, of the great "slogger," and the demon bowler: all the old figures true of one place as of another.

Cricket fills half the volume, and certainly the best half; though there are other sections dealing with golf, tennis, croquet and other games. The whole is most admirably done with a wholesome condemnation of "rotters" and "rotting a game," even in practice.

In practice it is a fatal mistake to bowl slovenly . . . after perhaps bowling steadily and well for ten minutes,

the young cricketer shouts out to his friend who is batting: "Now I will show you how Kortwright does it," or "I'll just give you a few of Trott's whizzers:" whereupon, already tired, he rushes up wildly and hurls the ball and himself down the pitch; or maybe he admires Lockwood, and starts his run forty yards away

This sort of thing, the author thinks, is "rotting," and does untold harm; so it may, but it serves to recall many a summer day's amusement and irresponsibility.

Across Many Seas. By Alfred Kinnear. (Arrowsmith. 6s.)

THIS story of action represents the adventures of a special correspondent in many parts of the world, detailed off one day to write up the Coronation and on another to leave for Ashanti at twelve hours' notice and "take his coffin with him." The book forms an interesting corollary to the history of our own times, and to read it is to have flashed back to memory the bulletin boards announcing the first news of every memorable event which has stirred the Empire during the last forty years. The special correspondent must undoubtedly possess many qualities, and be a man of considerable resource. The author is so blessed, and his adventures, whether blockade-running during the American war or scrambling through the Bush in West Africa, are charged with excitement. In a book of reminiscences, there is apt to be a lack of narrative sequence; and consequently one is rather inclined to dip and skip; particularly when the special correspondent indulges in leaderettes on the political situation. Mr. Kinnear has a good deal to say on the subject of press-censorship, but he says it good-humouredly. One little sample is worth quoting: "'Why,' the censor would say, 'should I allow the reporters to give Buller's secrets away? You have got a story certainly, but I have not permission from head-quarters to give it away. If you are very anxious to justify your existence, you may say that we have hoisted a new Union Jack So that "secret" is lost for ever, but the author who has flouted kings, interviewed criminals, and eaten sharks-tail has many other secrets stored away in this book which is heartily recommended to the general reader.

The Ivory Workers of the Middle Ages. By A. M. Cust. "Handbooks of the Great Craftsmen." (Bell.)

THIS well-executed and scholarly little volume belongs to a series which breaks somewhat new ground, and may perhaps lead to a more intelligent and less gaping use of the South Kensington and other collections of artistic treasures. Ivory carving was one of the first of the arts to emerge in the middle ages. Indeed, as Mr. Cust points out, it has lived right through from Roman times.

No such continuous chain has survived in any other artistic production, and this alone makes the study of the craft of such intense interest, illustrating as it does the early quickening of art in a period of great obscurity between the old order and the new.

Of all ivories, those of the late Roman and Byzantine Empires best repay study. The long series of consular "diptychs" presented by the consuls to senators and others in commemoration of their years of office, created a type which endured throughout the mediæval period. Many of these diptychs owe their preservation to their adaptation by bishops and others to liturgical purposes, as for instance the preservation of lists of persons to be prayed for during mass. Similarly—and it is one of the ironies of civilisation—the little ivory boxes carved with mythological subjects and used by the pagan fair women of Italy to hold cosmetics and other necessities of the toilet were often turned into pyxes for the reception of the consecrated host. After dealing fully with the Latin and Byzantine carvings Mr. Cust briefly traces the history of the art amongst the Anglo-Saxons, Lombards and Franks, and in Europe generally up to the beginning

of the Renaissance. The book is enriched with a liberal number of good photographic reproductions and ends with lists of the diptychs known to be preserved, and of the museums richest in mediæval ivories.

The Navy Records Society's excellent work is continued by the publication of a volume of short documents entitled *The Naval Miscellany*. The first item is a very curious sixteenth-century account of the decoration of a ship of war, and of the signals then in use in the French Navy. It has been taken from an MS. in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* the history of which is decidedly complex. But the interest of this *Book of War* by Jehan Bytharne, "Gunner in Ordinary to the King," is unquestionable. After certain directions for the management of a fleet when night is coming on we read: "When these things have been done you ought to sing the evening hymn to our Lady before her image, and put out all the lights in your ship . . . and at the stern of your ship you ought to hang out a flaming cresset, so that everyone may know and follow you." A contemporary account of the naval expedition to Cadiz in 1596 follows, and is of first-rate interest. Elsewhere in the volume we find some journals by Captain Henry Duncan beginning in 1776, and letters by Vernon, Nelson, and others. Other short naval records will be gathered into succeeding volumes of *The Naval Miscellany*.

In the Unit Library (Unit Library Limited, 11½d.) we have Captain James Burney's *History of the Buccaneers in America*, being one of the five quarto volumes of his great work, 1803–1817, published under the title *A Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean*. Burney's book is brave reading, and it could not be produced more satisfactorily for popular circulation. Mr. A. R. Waller mentions that the author was a brother of Fanny Burney, but further particulars would have been welcome; and his omission to mention his acquaintance with Charles Lamb (he figures in "The Wedding") is scarcely excusable.

Fiction.

Marta. By Paul Gwynne. (Constable. 6s.)

Marta is not a novel to be read critically. Judged from a high standard, it is not, properly speaking, a novel at all. It has none of the qualities that go to make a novel. There is no psychology; for instance, in the character-drawing; and the different people in it are types rather than individuals—Waring being the handsome hero, Marta the wronged heroine, Thurstan the treacherous villain, and so on. Nor is there any of the local colour that should distinguish a well-written story, laid, as this one is, in Spain; while the passions and emotions described are of the most primitive kind and devoid of any subtlety. For all that, *Marta* would probably pass as very good fiction with many readers. The plot of the story is full of startling incidents, the interest is fairly maintained to the end, and the dénouement is a happy one for those concerned. Frank Waring is the son of a Spanish father and an English mother; he goes to Spain after the death of the latter, by whom he has been brought up, and there falls in love with the beautiful Marta. He excites the jealousy of Thurstan, whom he finally challenges to a duel; but a compromise is arrived at, by which the two adversaries agree to draw lots as to which of them shall die by his own hand within a twelvemonth. The lot falls to Waring; and here the drama begins. When the first passion of jealousy subsides, he finds that he fears death, a feeling that is intensified later on when his misunderstanding with Marta is cleared up and she

becomes his wife. She implores him not to consider his foolish agreement a binding one; but his honour is at stake, and nothing but Thurstan's intervention can absolve him from his promise. How Marta sacrifices herself to bring about that intervention is the most exciting crisis in the plot; and it is a pity that the story should decline so suddenly in interest when her ingenious plan to save her husband has been revealed. We should like, too, to know what becomes of the villain. Melodrama, however, must inevitably come to a tame and unsatisfying conclusion; and it cannot be denied that Mr. Gwynne's book verges on the melodramatic. But, as we have said, it must not be read too critically; and as a mere story of incident, it is both pleasing and ingenious.

Brinton Elliot: from Yale to York Town. By James Eugene Farmer. (Macmillan. 6s.)

THERE are times when a singular dubiety as to the tastes of the reading public possesses one. So many dull books are written and published. And since more dull books follow upon their heels, are presumably read, it would seem as if dulness in literature had charms for a considerable number of persons. This hesitancy as to what the majority really requires from a work of fiction is revived by *Brinton Elliot*. For with a fair amount of plot, with writing, taken page by page, always practised and assured, and with dialogue frequently admirable and to the point, tediousness is inseparable from the greater part of it.

The story deals with the American War of Independence. Possibly the multitude of novels already written upon the same period of American History makes it extremely difficult material to succeed with. But, on the other hand, the subject of a novel is after all much as the keyboard to the musician. And in musician and writer both there is supremely necessary the quality that is, as it were, an infusion from a mind vividly impressed in some particular direction, or by some peculiarity of thought or emotion.

In *Brinton Elliot* there is nothing vivid, nothing taken from the quick, nothing with the force of a personal or passionate impression. The framework of the novel is one of action, and as such the movement should have been brisk, decided, and clipped of everything hampering the development of the story. But in reading *Brinton Elliot*, the reader might reasonably suppose that nothing in the world interested the writer less than the introduction of an actual incident. About a third part of the book, in fact, has to be got through before the story proper is reached at all. In the meantime Yale College in its earlier days is somewhat cumbrously treated, and a good deal of college talk is reported which remains entirely superfluous to the plot it prefaces. Miss Betty Allen, the heroine, however, is charming. With more of Miss Betty, and the brisk directness of manner that was one of her delightful qualities, *Brinton Elliot* would have been quite a successful and entertaining novel.

Mistress Barbara Cunliffe. By Halliwell Sutcliffe. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

WE opened this book with an irritable expectation of finding in it a tale of stomachers and farthingales; we were agreeably surprised therefore to find the author handling men and women as if he had lived among them, classes as if he had studied them, and events as if he had observed them. It was the "Mistress" that led astray us who had forgotten that in the conservative North the pretty word is still unmauled in daily use. Mr. Sutcliffe tells a tale of the early days of the great cotton industry, when millowners made their pile in the bloody sweat of others' brows, while the economic machine was still suffered to grind small without interference on the part of the legislature. His people are upon the borderland between the class of agriculturists on the point of extinction and

the great lords of organised labour, who have done so great things to build up the empire at the expense of the nation. Or, rather, they are taken some from the old kind some from the new; the link between Booth o' Goit Miln, sweater and slavedriver, on the one hand, and Squire Cunliffe on the other, with his secretly mortgaged acres and surreptitious hand labour, and Royd the expatriated landowner, who frankly has taken to trade, and, as the reward of rational humanity, is able to romp gallumphing home to his ancestral mansion with Barbara on his arm, what time the tyrant's destructions have come to an end. The story of Royd's love affair with Babara is told well enough; it is a conventional story; but better we like the idyl of Tim o' Tab's and Tabitha, and the homely wit of the Bull Tavern. Mr. Sutcliffe is not a Hardy or a George Eliot or a Blackmore; neither, in our judgment, can it be truly said that he holds "a high place among our foremost living novelists"—the phrase seems to have been applied to him; but he may certainly be counted among the capable chroniclers of provincial phases and types.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final Reviews of a selection will follow.]

BY FRANCES A. MATTHEWS.

MY LADY PEGGY GOES TO TOWN.

A lively eighteenth century story with ripples of adventures that end happily in a marriage. There are pictures and snatches of verse. Here is the Envoi:—

When gay postillions cracked their whips,
And gallants gemmed their chat with quips;
When patches nestled o'er sweet lips
At choc'late times; and, 'twixt the sips,
Fair Ladies gave their gossips tips;
Then, in Levantine gown and brooch,
My Lady Peggy took the coach,
For London Town!

(Grant Richards. 6s.)

DWELLERS BY THE RIVER. BY MRS. CAMPBELL PRAED.

Five Australian tales under such titles as "The Finding of the Waterhole," "The Winning of the Ubi Cup," and "The Marriage of Marge." The Ubi Cup was run for once a year, and was the great social event on the river. "It was, in fact, a sort of private Bush Derby. All who attended the meeting came by invitation. No bookmakers were allowed on the course, and betting was discouraged." (John Long. 6s.)

THE SCARLET LADY. BY ALAN ST. AUBYN.

The story opens in a room in a woman's college. Lisbeth has just received the offer of two situations—"both equally good—the thing is, which shall I choose?" She decides to accept the offer of a Catholic with a young daughter a Protestant, just returned from a Protestant school. Thereby the story. On page 96 we find this fragment of dialogue: "I won't hear a word said against Lisbeth," Annabel said eagerly; "she has done what she could. What could a mere woman do against the Pope and the Church of Rome?" (White. 6s.)

THE WHITE WITCH OF MAYFAIR. BY GEORGE GRIFFITH.

She dominates the book. In the Prologue Falconer succumbs to this enchantress who had bewitched London, Paris, and Vienna in rapid succession, and makes an astonishing compact with her. Mr. Griffith gives the reader some lively episodes. The White Witch does not survive the Epilogue. The mystery and tragedy of her death ran their usual course. "Nothing came out at the inquest." (White. 6s.)

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The Eternal Dreamer.

"ALWAYS they went forth to battle and always they fell." This comment is older than the Cæsars and its echoes have vibrated through the centuries across the whole of Europe. It has been always the same; they have gone forth, but it has been only to their doom. Pressing strenuously forward everywhere they have established nothing, not even the armed encampment of the Turk.

Essentially nomad and war-like, the Celt came to Europe first of the younger three, but only to be forced back, thwarted, compressed, enslaved. Older than the Teuton and the Slav, he yet retains something of the primitiveness of their common home. He who should have bred out the strain of the Asiatic has developed certain characteristics essentially eastern. But before all other things he is old, old with the fading memory of forgotten knowledge. What has he done?

The rhetorician who alone arouses him from his coma speaks to him of far-off things with windy emphasis; reminds him that it has been always others who have interpreted the dreams of life while he himself, the eternal dreamer, has stood listlessly aside; reminds him of the mystery of Egypt and the everlasting question of the Sphinx. What was he doing and thinking when the Greek gave to Europe the realisation of form, perfect alike in sculpture and in poetry? What did the Roman, with his slower purpose evolving the steadfastness of law and moral control, teach him? Did he catch nothing from France in the lingering twilight before the dawn, nothing from Italy in the universal renaissance of the world? Did Germany, painfully stuttering the message of the soul's awakening in the Reformation, teach him nothing? Could the blaze of Elizabethan genius leave him cold and inert? Did the terrible ferocity of religious conviction which on the one hand meant the savage piety of the Spanish Inquisition, on the other the masterpieces of Murillo, mean nothing to the Celt? Could he find nothing to fire his soul in the patient advance of a silent people over the endless Russian steppes? Did the questioning intelligence of Voltaire or the voice that came from the heart of Rousseau find no echo in his soul? Did the Revolution itself mean nothing to him but a far-off, alien madness? And at the last, when Germany roused herself and gave to the world philosophers instead of *philosophes*, was the message to the Celt equally vain and futile?

Greek form, Roman moral purpose, Italian colour, German fidelity to truth, Russian patience—these things, in their varied phases, have manifested themselves in European life. Whether the manifestation is mainly material, as in the dominance of Rome, or spiritual, as in the eternal survival of Athens, each of these racial traits has left a definite expression characteristic of a particular people. But has the Celt ever expressed himself? Even rhetoric becomes tiresome, when indefinitely prolonged, and the Celt checks his questioner with a glance, flashing with unborrowed wisdom but without words. He has taken no part in the world-movements, but there has

been that within him which they know who have followed forlorn hopes. He has never expressed the word sorrows, but he has felt them in his soul. He has not uttered the world's hopes, because he has never shared them. There is the secret of his silence, pathetic and significant now as at the beginning! "always they went forth to battle and always they fell." The rhetorician of the debating society, taunting him with his past, is obviously deserving only of his silence. But some decades ago another questioner, from quite another point of view, attempted to draw up for the Celt an apologia for his existence. Matthew Arnold appeared upon the platform devoted to general ideas with a distinct mission at a time when such missionaries were at all events tolerated. The encyclopædic head of Macaulay's school-boy had been exploited, had been even a little swollen by the facts of Anglo-Saxon prosperity. A mild reaction had set in of which Matthew Arnold was in part the cause, in part the effect. He did not appeal to the school-boy with the distended head, but to a milder product, the convertible Philistine, that is to say the "average man." His gospel was an Hellenized righteousness, gaped at by a people accustomed to a despotic Hebraism, modified in the interest of individual comfort. The Celt had obviously done nothing for Hebraism modified by the instinct towards comfort; had he done anything in favour of righteousness softened by the charm of Hellas? He approached the question a little dubiously, not at all as a *doctrinaire* but rather with the cultured urbanity of the dilettante in search of fleeting impressions. And the average man, still gaping a little, caught the phrases and played with them as catchwords. The "faithful," the "conventional way of handling nature," "Greek radiance" and "Celtic magic." Surely this is the unrecognised note, but who has struck it? Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats. It is to these that the Celt has whispered the secret of his soul; again he has given, but he has not possessed. Again he has engendered, but he has not created. Yes, it has been always so, and to the average man, scenting a futility glossed over by his master's urbanity, the Celt has nothing at all to reply.

And now the "average man," with his mild possibilities of a selected culture, has given place to another type quite indiscriminate as to any phase of selection. Hitherto the mob had at all events assumed their leader's right to veneration, however individually unsuitable they might appear as followers. It was of course a little incongruous that every poseur in England, with or without the facility of aspirates, should have regarded Ruskin as his guardian angel. It was a little unnecessary that every talkative sot in Europe should have considered the subtle questioner of the Rubaiyat as one answering his own puerile doubts. All this being freely granted, the attitude of mind was none the less that of respectful attention to the selected leader. But since then democracy, wearied of its eternal goose-step, has ambled nimbly forward into a perfect chaos of conflicting possibilities.

In this state of things the "leader" becomes a mere opportunist, speaking only when he is called upon, and saying only what he is expected to say. Preacher, politician, play-wright, sociologist each may "do his turn," but only if it coincides with the preconceived notions of a censor before whom all bow down. And who is this mysterious entity, the one virile mental and emotional force that speaks for the Anglo-Saxon race at the dawn of a new century? It is "the man in the street," and it is he who insists upon an answer from his brother the Celt. It is true, indeed, that he uses the term "brother" in much the same sense as he imagines it to have been used by St. Francis Assisi.

It might be difficult to explain to a foreigner the unchallenged authority of this Anglo-Saxon censor, because with foreign nations there has never been quite the same intellectual democracy. For example, it was possible for

Flaubert to discuss Chateaubriand as the great master of French prose during the nineteenth century, and to discuss him from this standpoint with such an alien intelligence as Zola. Well, one knows the comment of Parisian positivism, "Le grand style, c'est l'impotence." But imagine our Anglo-Saxon censor confronted with an English René! "What is he rotting about now?" would be his brief but intelligent comment. And in using this phrase he would be only using the idiomatic purity of speech which he himself has dictated to the litterateurs who cater for his approval. And he questions the Celt, questions him, and lectures him too. He does not ask him about his lost "magic," but about his income tax and his poor rates. He wishes to know why he, the Celt, alone in the Empire is hopelessly non-commercial, hopelessly unprogressive. He passes glibly from Liverpool to Melbourne and waves a complaining finger at Limerick and Cork. He wants to know *why* it is, and he is a man accustomed to being answered. In the meantime he is even willing to investigate at first hand for himself, and, blaspheming against Irish accommodation and Irish cooking, he pays his way into the dream-haunted wilds of Kerry which never more will be quite the same. And the Celt watches the "tourists" with the wonder of an unconscious disdain. Why can he never, never be quite like them? What is the inseparable gulf between them? Why must he, even in an age avowedly devoted to progressive comfort, remain always the man outside in the cold? "Food, climate, natural surroundings," says the Saxon tripper, cheerfully quoting Buckle whom he has never read. But the Celt, grave when the grimace has died from his lips, sees that one must search deeper than this. Searches, in fact, into the depths of his own soul, that soul which has only expressed itself in random witticisms for the benefit of Anglo-Saxon tourists and in the jocose banalities of the Irish members. It is strange, in passing, that a race in whom world-weariness accentuated by irony is perhaps the predominant characteristic should so long have kept its position as the buffoon of Europe. But the censor is persistent. Will they ever be like us? Will they ever amalgamate?

Individually, he knows, they can play with his catch-words, pronounce his shibboleths, imitate his standpoints, share even in his prosperity. They, too, can force their way, noisy and blatant, to a goal they had never recognised. But here we must presume for once to appeal from the "man in the street" to, let us say, the authority of Lombroso or Ferrari. Surely they could track the Celtic peasant in the American company promoter or the Melbourne manipulator of mining shares? Surely they can eliminate from the naked Celtic soul the persuasive culture of Oxford, the glaring prestige of Mayfair, the shadowed refinement of the Faubourg St. Germain? Surely they would tell us that the Celt can never be quite Anglo-Saxon or quite cosmopolitan, because he himself is conscious of a gulf between them and him. He must be always himself; it is his right, as it is his curse.

And now that the censor has had exploited before him in their turn the problem of a woman with a past, the reality of a large section of humanity without a future, the rights, wrongs, capacities and incapacities of women, the interests of younger sons and the idioms of private soldiers—now that every corner of the earth has yielded its quota for approval or ridicule, the Celt must be exploited and the necessary machinery has been set in motion. The Celtic movement sounds a little *vieux jeu* already, but the new century will breathe into it new life. The man in the street will guffaw over the old tales in their Saxon dress, the simple wistful poetry transfused into an alien tongue. The Celt has spoken at last! What is he rotting about now?

But the Celt will not have spoken. For him there can be no little renaissance fostered by a foreign tolerance, prolonged by a curiosity however sympathetic. Let the

Anglo-Saxon take an anthology and read it in his own tongue, by all means let him take it, but do not let him imagine that the Celt has ever "spoken out." Let them take his anthology and then leave him alone by his lakes or on his hills. And then at some moment, far away from the trippers, the old magic will surely come to him again and he will smile as at some memory revived for an instant in a dream, but even as his lips smile there will be tears in his eyes. For in that instant he will have caught the secret that was for him alone, the joy of living that was Greek and the "lacrimae rerum" that belonged to the Celt of Mantua. The first he would have expressed in his life, had it not become tainted for him at its source; the second has been, and will always be, with him to the end. Laughter saddened by irony, tears embittered by a sense of failure, what need is there for speech? For an exquisite moment there may return to him the glamour of the lost cause, but assuredly there will follow the paralysis of beaten effort. Surely the secret of the Celts is written in their lives, "Always they went forth to battle and always they fell."

The "Indian Shakespeare."

WHETHER cosmopolitanism makes for the production of creative literature may be doubted; it is under narrowly national conditions that the masterpieces of the world's literature have been begotten; but cosmopolitanism has been the note of modern literature for years past, and it seems now to be in fair process of draining down to the commonalty of readers, according to the lot of movements which in their inception were fastidiously "select." Popular series of translations from foreign masterpieces increase upon us, and the latest sign of the tendency is the little volume of translations from Hindu poetry which the Walter Scott Publishing Co. has added to the "Scott Library," in which Kalidasa occupies the bulk of the book. Popular cosmopolitanism must be well a-foot, when the interest of the "general reader" is postulated for "Sakuntala."

Yet this most classic of Hindu dramas has universal features enough to give it appeal for those who can overcome the strangeness of the atmosphere—the names, the customs, and the mythology. The names and mythology are not stranger than those of the "Celtic Revival," while the present interest in things Hindu should give it a "lift." Kalidasa has not—of course—escaped the title of the "Indian Shakespeare." It was predestined; and you only sigh gently when you see it awaiting you on the title-page of this volume. Equally of course, beyond the fact that he is the dramatist of India, he has no likeness to Shakespeare. There is very little action; and compared even with those plays of Shakespeare to which it comes nearest, "Sakuntala" is manifestly inferior as regards individualisation of character. "The Tempest" reeks with character, comparatively. "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with Bottom and his company cut out, would be closest to its poetic generalisation of types. Yet in its poetic-dramatic convention, it shows singular affinity to the Elizabethan drama, as does the Sanskrit drama in general.

It is a simple story. King Dushyanta, hunting in the forest, meets a girl bred up in a community of hermits, the adopted daughter of whose head, Canna, she is. But she was really the offspring of a king and a divine nymph. They fell in love, and he promises to return for her in three days. But Sakuntala, absorbed in thought of him, neglects a man of tremendous piety who claims hospitality; and the saint promptly curses her. Her husband shall forget her as if she had never met him. He is prevailed upon to mitigate the curse by adding that the king shall regain his memory at sight of her ring. The curse works.

Dushyanta does not return for her; and when she sets out to claim her position as his wife, he denies her. The ring has slipped from her finger when she was washing; and she goes out weeping, to be caught up by her mother and carried to the mountain of the god Casyapa. The ring is found in a fish, and at sight of it Dushyanta regains his memory and is inconsolable. But the god Indra demands his aid against a demon-race. Returning victorious from the abode of Indra, the heavenly car "drops him" at Casyapa's mountain, where he finds Sakuntala and the boy to whom she has given birth. All ends happily, with the benediction of the divine Casyapa and his wife.

Nothing could be less "dramatic" from our standpoint. The charm lies in the love-scenes, and the idyllic pictures of a simple forest-life among innocent girls. The "nature" of it penetrates all strangenesses of alien life, and goes straight to the general heart. It is a Hindu *Perdita* wooed by a Hindu *Romeo*—though such comparisons are always misleading. The English reader feels the beauty of the writing even through the eighteenth century formalities and "elegances" of Sir William Jones's prose version, which has been chosen for the "Scott Library." It is worse than eighteenth century—it is late eighteenth century, the clumsy pseudo-Johnsonian style of the *Times* and journalism generally at that era. Yet it is preferable to the version of Prof. Monier Williams, who has neutralised his scholarship by adopting metre; and for poetry he has no more aptitude than other Professors. Still, through the stilted sentences of Sir William Jones you can see the naturalness of the girlish chatter in the scene between Sakuntala and her companions which we condense; and can imagine the true masterliness of the original.

Priyamvada [*smiling*]: Do you know, my Anusuya, why Sakuntala gazes on the plants with such rapture?

Anusuya: No, indeed: I was trying to guess. Pray tell me.

Priyam.: "As the Grove's Delight is united to a suitable tree, thus I too hope for a bridegroom to my mind,"—that is her private thought at this moment.

Sakun.: Such are the flights of your own imagination.

Anus.: Here is a plant, Sakuntala, which you have forgotten, though it has grown up like yourself, under the care of our father Canna.

Sakun.: Then I shall forget myself. O wonderful! O Priyamvada, I have delightful tidings for you!

Priyam.: What tidings, beloved?

Sakun.: This madhavi creeper, though it be not the usual time for flowering, is covered with gay blossoms from its roots to its top!

Both: Is it really so, sweet friend?

Sakun.: Is it so? Look yourselves.

Priyam. [*eagerly*]: From this omen, Sakuntala, I announce you an excellent husband, who will soon take you by the hand.

Sakun. [*displeased*]: A strange fancy of yours!

Priyam.: Indeed, my beloved, I speak not jestingly. I heard something from our father Canna. Your nurture of these plants has prospered; and thence it is that I foretell your approaching nuptials.

Anus.: It is thence, my Priyamvada, that she has watered them with so much alacrity.

Sakun.: The madhavi plant is my sister: can I do otherwise than cherish her?

The playful girlish banter, the natural turning of their minds towards married thoughts, the tender interest in their sylvan charges, make up a picture no less Western than Eastern, and full of forest sounds and sights. The love-scene, in which Dushyanta first overhears Sakuntala confess to her companions that she loves him, and then woos her, has the idyllic voluptuousness of a great poet: even in the stilted and prosaic prose of Sir William Jones, one can conceive the original worthy of Shakespeare. With limitations, nevertheless, as to tone rather than power. It is the love-making of *Troilus* and *Cressida*, not the love of *Romeo* and *Juliet*, still less of *Ferdinand*

and *Aliranda*—that divinity of young courtship. Sakuntala does not emulate *Juliet's* confiding readiness of surrender in a like surprisal of her love-confession, with its confident reliance on *Romeo's* honourable intent of marriage; yet farther is she from rising to *Miranda's* brilliant candour. Though only less a hermitess than the isolated *Miranda*, unknowing of woman, or of man save her father, Sakuntala shows sufficient distrust of her lover and herself, which her lover sufficiently justifies. Were it otherwise, Kalidasa would doubtless have thought his young wooer but slack. Something, even in his mere poetry, Shakespeare owed to Christian tradition. Kalidasa is *Troilus* and *Cressida* with the earthy comment of *Pandarus* omitted—elementary passion in its most delicate form. But the tenderest thing in this drama of the idyllic and the ideal is Sakuntala's departure from her forest-home. The sundering of maiden ties, the grief of her companions, the leave-taking from her animate and inanimate fondlings, is rendered with exquisite simplicity. Old Canna, himself unmanned, at the close regains the ascetic composure which he is ashamed to have forfeited, while the girls are inconsolable—a differentiating touch which completes the moving naturalism of the whole scene. It would be enough to seal Kalidasa a Master in any literature.

Sakun.: Father, when yon female antelope, who now moves slowly from the weight of the young with which she is pregnant, shall be delivered, send me, I beg, a kind message with news of her safety.

Canna: My beloved, I will not forget it.

Sakun.: Ah, what is it that clings to the skirts of my robe and detains me?

Canna: It is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whose mouth, when the sharp points of cusa grass had wounded it, has been so often smeared by thy hand with the healing oil.

Sakun.: Why dost thou weep, tender fawn, for me, who must leave our common dwelling-place? As thou wast reared by me when thou hadst lost thy mother . . . so will my foster-father attend thee, when we are separated, with anxious care. Return, poor thing, return, we must part.

[*She bursts into tears.*]

But quotation merely misrepresents what depends on the cumulative effect of tenderly imagined detail. Dushyanta's ride through the air on Indra's car is similarly made effective by the finely imaginative detail—thus a car *would* speed through the clouds. Even Casyapa's celestial mountain becomes real as the Himalayan forest, by the picture of Dushyanta's heroic child—a Hindu *Hercules*, whom his nurses vainly persuade to loose a lion's whelp, which he has dragged, "with torn mane," from "the half-sucked nipple of the lioness."

Boy: Open thy mouth, lion's whelp, that I may count thy teeth.

1st Attendant: Intractable child! . . . Thou seemest even to sport in anger.

2nd Attendant: The lioness will tear thee to pieces if thou release not her whelp.

Boy [*smiling*]: Oh! I am greatly afraid of her, to be sure.

1st Attendant: My beloved child, set at liberty this young prince of wild beasts, and I will give thee a prettier plaything.

Boy: Give it first. Where is it?

Enough, though condensed and but a part, to show the simple touches by which Kalidasa makes real even mythologic marvel. He has, withal, an imagery of abounding fancy, though without the imaginative depth of the greatest Western imagery. With such qualities, even in a defective garb of English prose, Kalidasa can impress the reader; though it is by the whole, and not through extracts or descriptive articles, that he must impress him.

Diversions in O.

THE sound of O, being the most easily pronounced in the language, has become the most expressive. Even Dr. Murray makes no attempt to catalogue its powers. He says that it expresses "according to intonation, various emotions, an appeal, entreaty, surprise, pain, lament, &c." But let any man try to take a census of the O's and Oh's heard in everyday speech, and ever on his own tongue: he will be astonished by the multitudinous meanings O bears according as it is grunted, whispered, drawled, exploded, cooed, quavered, clipped, prolonged, enriched, attenuated, sighed, thundered, flung heavenward or dropped earthward. One begins to think that there is no emotion or mental state that cannot be expressed or indicated by "O," not omitting the feeling of astonished pride with which, bit by bit, as its parts appear, one contemplates the *New English Dictionary*.

In the double part of this work now before us, Dr. Murray deals with words from O to Onomastic, and we have found crammed within this semi-O (to adapt Shakespeare's description of the Curtain Theatre) a wealth of interest and romance beyond "the very casques that did affright the air of Agincourt." Indeed the oblectation we have found in turning these omnibus pages has for us obtunded, obnubilated, and all but obliterated that odible omniregency of fiction (ogling or occatory) which so obrutes, not to say obscures, this ochlocratical age. Can we say more? Or less—when we read that an odelet is a little ode, the very word we have been looking for these three weeks?

There are other surprises. What does the word oary suggest to you? 'Oary old sinner? Just so. But why not "of the nature, or having the function of an oar." As thus:

The swan, with arched neck
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet.

That is from the seventh book of *Paradise Lost*. A more adventurously beautiful meaning is given to the word by a translator of the "Agamemnon":

So, when bereaved the vultures ply
Their oary wings across the sky.

Another word so rare as to seem new is oathable, meaning capable of taking an oath. "Are you oathable?" would be a convenient question for a police court solicitor, and might sometimes forestall misunderstandings. "My good woman, do you understand the nature of an oath?" asked one of Charles Keene's barristers. "Well, sir" (with a curtesy), "I did ought to, bein' as my 'usbin's a Coven' Garding porter." The joke is in Shakespeare. Timon says:

You are not oathable,
Although I know, you'll swear, terribly swear
Into strong shudders and to heavenly agues
The immortal gods that hear you.

Is oatmeal mentioned in the Bible? It used to appear with effect in Proverbs xxvii., 22, where we now read: "Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." This is surely no improvement on Coverdale's "Though thou shouldest bray a foole with a pestell in a morter like otemeel." Here the braying seems twice as thorough. Oddly enough, oatmeal connoted folly as late as the seventeenth century when the word was applied to profligate young (Scotch?) men. In Ford's play, "The Sun's Darling," we read of certain "roaring boys and oatmeals."

We do not know that we have a use for the word obambulate, to walk hither and thither. A seventeenth century author, an Earl of Manchester, could write "In the

interim the Soule doth not wander and obambulate." As late as 1855 a writer talked of "obambulatory merchants," meaning pedlars, a phrase which we feel the *Daily Telegraph* will not willingly let die. As applied to firs and cypresses by Shelley, "obeliskine" is a good word: "cypress groves whose obeliskine forms of intense green pierce the grey shadow of the wintry hill." The word objective in its current philosophical use has an interesting history. It was so used by a few writers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, but, says Dr. Murray, its current use appears to be derived from Kant and to have appeared in England chiefly after 1817. He shows that in that year Coleridge wrote: "The very words *objective* and *subjective*, of such constant occurrence in the schools of yore, I have ventured to re-introduce." In a note to a late edition of the *Confessions of an Opium Eater* (we do not find it in our edition of 1823) De Quincey wrote: "This word, so nearly unintelligible in 1821, so intensely scholastic, and, consequently, when surrounded by familiar and vernacular words, so apparently pedantic, yet, on the other hand, so indispensable to accurate thinking, and to wide thinking, has since 1821 become too common to need any apology."

A true dictionary word is oboist: a performer on the oboe. In one of his essays Hazlitt remarks on the curious way in which the mind alters true chronology to fit its prepossessions, so that what happened under the Cæsars in Rome seems more modern than obscure events of a later age in England. We share this feeling when we read the quotation: "The oboists of the last generation, using reeds of very large dimensions." The pyramid of Cheops seems new, the Parthenon seems not to have dried its mortar, and we could swear we had seen Pompey on a bus, when we think of "the oboists of the last generation." How soon hath Time obumbered these sons of music, compared with whom Theocritus with his oaten flute seems of to-day!

A singular history attaches to the word occupy. Its early use in England to express unlawful cohabitation caused many writers of the first class to taboo the word. Dr. Murray says:—

The disuse of this verb in the 17th and most of the 18th century is notable. Against 194 quotations for the 16th century, we have for the 17th only 8, outside the Bible of 1611 where it occurs 10 times), and for the 18th century only 10, all of its last 33 years. The verb occurs only twice (equivocally) in Shakespeare, is entirely absent from the Concordances to Milton and Pope, is not used by Gray; all Johnson's quotations, except two, are from the Bible of 1611. It was again freely used by Cowper (13 instances in Concordance). This avoidance appears to have been due to its vulgar employment in sense 8; cf. 1597 SHAKS. 2 *Hen. IV.*, II. iv. 161 (Qo. 1600) A captain? Gods light these villaines wil make the word as odious as the word occupy, which was an excellent good worde before it was il sorted. a 1637 B. JONSON *Discov., De Stylo* (1640) 112 Many, out of their owne obscene Apprehensions, refuse proper and fit words; as *occupie*, *nature*, and the like.

The present writer has a great dislike of packed crowds, but it is only from Dr. Murray that he has learned to call himself an ochlophobist. "The ochlophobist has but a hard time in London just now," remarked the *Daily News* on December 5, 1882, and we have known subsequent occasions when we would have thanked the *Daily News* for that word.

Ogle is interesting. It was born in a humble, and indeed disreputable sphere, being vagabonds' cant for an eye, as in Ned Ward's rhyme:—

He rowl'd his Ogles with a Grace
Becoming so a zealous Face.

Moore, describing a prize fight (1819) wrote: "Round lugs and ogles flew the frequent fist." Frequent fist is good. But as early as 1711 the word had another meaning for

Addison, who printed in the *Spectator* the prospectus of a professor of the "whole art of Ogling": "I teach the Church Ogle in the morning, and the Play-house Ogle by Candle-light." When this meaning had been fully developed Washington Irving began using the word in the semi-humorous sense of to eye, to look at. "There was a portly parson, whom I observed ogling several mouldy writers through an eyeglass," and as late 1891 Mr. Clark Russell could write: "He stood ogling the wreck through his binocular."

It is interesting to find that the word old as an adjective of jocular endearment ("old boy") is found in Shakespeare, who in "Titus Andronicus" makes Aaron say:—

Look how the black slave smiles upon the father,
As who should say "Old lad, I am thine own."

A most interesting word to writers is *œstrus*. Entomologically speaking, the *œstrus* is a genus of dipterous insects, of which the larvæ are parasitic in the bodies of various animals. An *œstrus* is a gadfly, and was well known to Virgil who describes the madness of cattle under its attacks. "The *œstrus* or bot-fly deposits the ova unknown to the individual" wrote a naturalist in 1876. Meanwhile, Edward Fitzgerald had observed the *œstrus* of literary composition. We forget whom he was criticising—was it Tennyson?—when he wrote: "The Impetus, the Lyrical *œstrus* is gone." The word lived, and Mark Pattison could write, thirty years later, of Milton: "He would not write more verses when the *œstrus* was not on him." Here we must stop, not because the *œstrus* has left us, but because our printer has it too.

The Truth about an Author.

Chapters in Autobiography.

XII.

SERIAL Fiction is sold and bought just like any other fancy-goods. It has its wholesale houses, its commercial travellers—even its trusts and "corners." An editor may for some reason desire the work of a particular author; he may dangle gold before that author or that author's agent; but if a corner has been established he will be met by polite regrets and the information that Mr. So-and-So, or the Such-and-Such Syndicate, is the proper quarter to apply to; then the editor is aware that he will get what he wants solely by one method of payment—through the nose. A considerable part of the fiction business is in the hand of a few large syndicates—syndicates in name only, and middlemen in fact. They perform a useful function. They will sell to the editor the entire rights of a serial, or they will sell him the rights for a particular district—the London district, the Manchester district, the John-o'-Groats district—the price varying in direct ratio with the size of the district. Many London papers are content to buy the London rights only of a serial, or to buy the English rights as distinct from the Scottish rights, or to buy the entire rights minus the rights of one or two large provincial districts. Thus a serial may make its original appearance in London only; or it may appear simultaneously in London and Manchester only, or in London only in England and throughout Scotland, or in fifty places at once in England and Scotland. And after a serial has appeared for the first time and run its course, the weeklies of small and obscure towns, the proud organs of all the Little Peddlingtons, buy for a trifle the right to reprint it. The serials of some authors survive in this manner for years in the remote provinces; pick up the

local sheet in a country inn and you may perhaps shudder again over the excitations of a serial that you read in book form in the far-off nineties. So, all editorial purses are suited, the syndicates reap much profit, and they are in a position to pay their authors, both tame and wild, a just emolument; upon occasion they can even be generous to the verge of an imprudence.

When I was an editor, I found it convenient, economical, and satisfactory to buy all my fiction from a large and powerful syndicate. I got important "names," the names that one sees on the title-pages of railway novels, at a moderate price, and it was nothing to me that my serial was appearing also in Killierankie, the Knockmillydown Mountains, or the Scilly Isles. The representative of the syndicate, a man clothed with authority, called regularly; he displayed his dainty novelties, his leading lines, his old favourites, his rising stars, his dark horses, and his dead bargains; I turned them over, like a woman on remnant-day at a draper's; and after the inevitable Oriental chaffering, we came to terms. I bought Christmas stories in March, and seaside fiction in December, and good solid Baring-Gould or Le Queux or L. T. Meade all the year round.

Excellent as these ingenious narrative confections served their purpose, I dreamed of something better. And in my dream a sudden and beautiful thought accosted me: Why should all the buying be on one side?

And the next time the representative of the syndicate called upon me, I met his overtures with another.

"Why should all the buying be on one side?" I said. "You know I am an author." I added that if he had not seen any of my books, I must send him copies. They were exquisitely different from his wares, but I said nothing about that.

"Ah!" he parried firmly. "We never buy serials from editors."

I perceived that I was by no means the first astute editor who had tried to mingle one sort of business with another. Still, it was plain to me that my good friend was finding it a little difficult to combine the affability of a seller with the lofty disinclination of one who is requested to buy in a crowded market.

"I should have thought," I remarked, with a diplomatic touch of annoyance, "that you would buy wherever you could get good stuff."

"Oh, yes," he said, "of course we do. But—"

"Well," I continued, "I am writing a serial, and I can tell you it will be a good one. I merely mention it to you. If you don't care for it, I fancy I can discover someone who will."

Then, having caused to float between us, cloud-like, the significance of the indisputable fact that there were other syndicates in the world, I proceeded nonchalantly to the matter of his visit and gave him a good order. He was an able merchant, but I had not moved in legal circles for nothing. Business is business: and he as well as I knew that arbitrary rules to the exclusion of editors must give way before this great and sublime truth, the foundation of England's glory.

The next thing was to concoct the serial. I had entered into a compact with myself that I would never "write down" to the public in a long fiction. I was almost bound to pander to the vulgar taste, or at any rate to a taste not refined, in my editing, in my articles, and in my short stories, but I had sworn solemnly that I would keep the novel-form unsullied for the pure exercise of the artist in me. What became of this high compact? I merely ignored it. I tore it up and it was forgotten, the instant I saw a chance of earning the money of shame. I devised excuses, of course. I said that my drawing-room wanted new furniture; I said that I might lift the sensational serial to a higher place, thus serving the cause of art; I said—I don't know what I said, all to my conscience. But I began the serial.

As an editor, I knew the qualities that a serial ought to possess. And I knew specially that what most serials lacked was a large central, unifying, vivifying idea. I was very fortunate in lighting upon such an idea for my first serial. There are no original themes; probably no writer ever did invent an original theme; but my theme was a brilliant imposture of originality. It had, too, grandeur and passion and fantasy, and it was inimical to none of the prejudices of the serial-reader. In truth it was a theme worthy of much better treatment than I accorded to it. Throughout the composition of the tale, until nearly the end, I had the uneasy feeling, familiar to all writers, that I was frittering away a really good thing. But as the climax approached, the situation took hold of me, and in spite of myself I wrote my best. The tale was divided into twelve instalments of five thousand words each, and I composed it in twenty-four half days. Each morning, as I walked down the Thames Embankment, I contrived a chapter of two thousand five hundred words, and each afternoon I wrote the chapter. An instinctive sense of form helped me to plan the events into an imposing shape, and it needed no abnormal inventive faculty to provide a thrill for the conclusion of each section. Further, I was careful to begin the story on the first page, without preliminaries, and to finish it abruptly when it was finished. For the rest, I put in generous quantities of wealth, luxury, feminine beauty, surprise, catastrophe, and genial, incurable optimism. I was as satisfied with the result as I had been with the famous poem on Courage. I felt sure that the syndicate had never supplied me with a sensational serial half as good as mine, and I could conceive no plea upon which they would be justified in refusing mine.

They bought it. We had a difference concerning the price. They offered sixty pounds; I thought I might as well as not try to get a hundred, but when I had lifted them up to seventy-five, the force of bluff would no further go, and the bargain was closed. I saw that by writing serials I could earn three guineas per half-day; I saw myself embarking upon a life of what Ebenezer Jones called "sensation and event"; I saw my prices increasing—even to three hundred pounds for a sixty thousand word yarn—my imagination stopped there.

The lingering remains of an artistic conscience prompted me to sign this eye-smiting work with a pseudonym. The syndicate, since my name was quite unknown in their world, made no objection, and I invented several aliases, none of which they liked. Then a friend presented me with a gorgeous pseudonym—"Sampson Death." Surely, I thought, the syndicate will appreciate the subtle power of that! But no! They averred that their readers would be depressed by Sampson Death at the head of every instalment.

"Why not sign your own name?" they suggested.

And I signed my own name. I, apprentice of Flaubert et Cie., stood forth to the universe as a sensation-monger.

The syndicate stated that they would like to have the refusal of another serial from my pen.

In correcting the proofs of the first one, I perceived all the opportunities I had missed in it, and I had visions of a sensational serial absolutely sublime in those qualities that should characterise a sensational serial. I knew all about Eugène Sue, and something about Wilkie Collins; but my ecstatic contemplation of an ideal serial soared far beyond these. I imagined a serial decked with the profuse ornament of an Eastern princess, a serial at once grandiose and witty, at once modern and transcendental, a serial of which the interest should gradually close on the reader like a vice until it became intolerable. I saw the whole of London preoccupied with this serial instead of with cricket and politics. I heard the dandiacal City youths discussing in first-class compartments on the Underground what would happen next in it. I witnessed a riot in Fleet Street because I had, accidentally on

purpose, delayed my copy for twenty-four hours, and the Editor of the *Daily* — had been compelled to come out with an apology. Lastly, I heard the sigh of relief exhaled to heaven by a whole people, when in the final instalment I solved the mystery, untied the knot, relieved the cruel suspense.

Such was my dream—a dream that I never realised, but which I believe to be capable of realisation. It is decades since even a second-class imaginative genius devoted itself entirely to the cult of the literary *frisson*. Sue excited a nation by admirable sensationalism. The feat might be accomplished again, and in this era so prolific in Napoleons of the press, it seems strange that no Napoleon has been able to organise the sensational serial on a Napoleonic scale.

I did not realise my dream, but I was inspired by it. Once more I received from the gods a plot scintillating with possibilities. It was less fine than the previous one; it was of the earth earthy; but it began with a scene quite unique in the annals of syndicates, and by this time I knew a little better how to keep the fire burning. I lavished wit and style on the thing, and there is no material splendour of modern life that I left out. I plunged into it with all my energy and enthusiasm, and wrote the fifteen instalments in fifteen days; I tried to feel as much like Dumas *père* as I could. But when I had done I felt, physically, rather more like the fragile Shelley or some wan curate than Dumas. I was a wreck.

The syndicate were willing to buy this serial, but they offered me no increase of rates. I declined to accept the old terms, and then the syndicate invited me to lunch. I made one of the greatest financial mistakes of my life on that accursed day, and my only excuse is that I was unaccustomed to being invited out to lunch by syndicates. I ought to have known, with all my boasted knowledge of the world of business, that syndicates do not invite almost unknown authors to lunch without excellent reason. I had refused the syndicate's offer, and the syndicate asked me to name a price for the entire rights of my tale. I named a price; it was a good price for me, then; but the words were scarcely out of my mouth before I saw that I had blundered. Too late! My terms were quietly accepted. Let me cast no slightest aspersion upon the methods of the syndicate: the bargain was completed before lunch had commenced.

The syndicate disposed of the whole first serial rights of my tale to a well-known London weekly. The proprietors of the paper engaged a first-class artist to illustrate it, they issued a special circular about it, they advertised it every week on 800 railway stations. The editor of the paper wrote me an extremely appreciative letter as to the effect of the serial from his point of view. The syndicate informed a friend of mine that it was the best serial they had ever had. After running in London, it overran the provincial press like a locust-swarm. It was, in a word, a boom. It came out in volume-form, and immediately went into a second edition; it still sells. It was the first of my books that the *Times* ever condescended to review; the *Spectator* took it seriously in a column and a quarter; and my friends took it seriously. I even received cables from foreign lands with offers to buy translation rights. I became known as the author of that serial. And all this, save for an insignificant trifle, to the profit of an exceedingly astute syndicate!

Subsequently I wrote other serials, but never again with the same verve. I found an outlet for my energies more amusing and more remunerative than the concoction of serials; and I am a serialist no longer.

(To be continued.)

Drama.

"Monna Vanna."

I WAS too much occupied last week with the question of the censorship, as it proved its own absurdity in the case of "Monna Vanna," to say much about the play itself. But as there is nothing more pressing this week, I may be permitted to go back to "Monna Vanna," and to consider its dramatic qualities more dispassionately than I should have felt in the mood to do last week.

In his earlier plays Maeterlinck invented a world of his own, which was a sort of projection into space of the world of nursery legends and of childish romances. It was at once very abstract and very local. There was a castle by the sea, a "well at the world's end," a pool in a forest; princesses with names out of the "Morte d'Arthur" lost crowns of gold, and blind beggars without a name wandered in the darkness of eternal terror. Death was always the scene-shifter of the play, and destiny the stage-manager. The people who came and went had the blind gestures of marionnettes, and one pitied their helplessness. Pity and terror had indeed gone to the making of this drama, in a sense much more literal than Aristotle's.

In all these plays there were few words and many silences, and the words were ambiguous, hesitating, often repeated, like the words of peasants or children. They were rarely beautiful in themselves, rarely even significant, but they suggested a singular kind of beauty and significance, through their adjustment in a pattern or arabesque. Atmosphere, the suggestion of what was not said, was everything; and in an essay in "Le Trésor des Humbles" Maeterlinck told us that in drama, as he conceived it, it was only the words that were not said which mattered.

Gradually the words began to mean more in the scheme of the play. With "Aglavaine et Sélysette" we got a drama of the inner life, in which there was little action, little effective dramatic speech, but in which people thought about action and talked about action, and discussed the morality of things and their meaning, very beautifully. "Monna Vanna" is a development out of "Aglavaine et Sélysette" and in it for the first time Maeterlinck has represented the conflicts of the inner life in an external form, making drama, while the people who undergo them discuss them frankly at the moment of their happening.

In a significant passage of "La Sagesse et la Destinée," Maeterlinck says: "On nous affirme que toutes les grandes tragédies ne nous offrent pas d'autre spectacle que la lutte de l'homme contre la fatalité. Je crois, au contraire, qu'il n'existe pas une seule tragédie où la fatalité règne réellement. J'ai beau les parcourir, je n'en trouve pas une où le héros combatte le destin pur et simple. Au fond, ce n'est jamais le destin, c'est toujours la sagesse, qu'il attaque." And, on the preceding page, he says: "Observons que les poètes tragiques osent très rarement permettre au sage de paraître un moment sur la scène. Ils craignent une âme haute parce que les événements la craignent." Now it is this conception of life and of drama that we find in "Monna Vanna." We see the conflict of wisdom, personified in the old man Marco and in the instinctively wise Giovanna, with the tragic folly personified in the husband Guido, who rebels against truth and against life, and loses even that which he would sacrifice the world to keep. The play is full of lessons in life, and its deepest lesson is a warning against the too ready acceptance of this or that aspect of truth or of morality. Here is a play in which almost every character is noble, in which treachery becomes a virtue, a lie becomes more vital than truth, and only what we are accustomed to call virtue shows itself mean, petty, and even criminal. And it is most like life, as life really is,

in this: that at any moment the whole course of the action might be changed, the position of every character altered, or even reversed, by a mere decision of the will, open to each, and that things happen as they do because it is impossible, in the nature of each, that the choice could be otherwise. Character, in the deepest sense, makes the action, and there is something in the movement of the play which resembles the grave and reasonable march of a play of Sophocles, in which men and women deliberate wisely and not only passionately, in which it is not only the cry of the heart and of the senses which takes the form of drama.

In Maeterlinck's earlier plays, in "Les Aveugles," "Intérieur," and even "Pelléas et Mélisande," he is dramatic after a new, experimental fashion of his own; "Monna Vanna" is dramatic in the obvious sense of the word. The action moves, and moves always in an interesting, even in a telling, way. But at the same time I cannot but feel that something has been lost. The speeches, which were once so short as to be enigmatical, are now too long, too explanatory; they are sometimes rhetorical, and have more logic than life. The playwright has gained experience, the thinker has gained wisdom, but the curious artist has lost some of his magic. No doubt the wizard had drawn his circle too small, but now he has stepped outside his circle into a world which no longer obeys his formulas. In casting away his formulas, has he the big human mastery which alone could replace them? "Monna Vanna" is a remarkable and beautiful play, but it is not a masterpiece. "La Mort de Tintagiles" was a masterpiece of a tiny, too deliberate, kind; but it did something which no one had ever done before. We must still, though we have seen "Monna Vanna," wait, feeling that Maeterlinck has not given us all that he is capable of giving us.

It was, of course, difficult to judge of the play as an acting play from the cramped performance at the Victoria Hall. In spite of all difficulties, it was acted with admirable vigour and comprehension. Madame Georgette Leblanc, of whose qualities as a singer I wrote some time ago in these columns, showed that she was at least as much the actress as the singer. She has not yet completely mastered her own instincts, or acquired her own method, as an actress, but, as it was, her acting was an interpretation. There were moments of gaiety and moments of delirium when she was absolutely herself, that is to say absolutely Monna Vanna. A great actress could not have done more for those moments than she did for them. At other times she remembered, a little too obviously, that she was acting a part. I should like to see her in a play of a very different kind, in which the actress would not be re-inforced by the woman. Only then could one test the extent of her talent as an actress. I believe that she too has not given us all that she is capable of giving us.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

Art.

Mosaics and Mural Paintings.

A WEEK or two ago I sat for an hour or so in the unfinished Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster. It was something of an event to see a Cathedral in the making; something to sit within that vast shell, and with the memories of Gothic architecture secure in the affections to feel the influence of this Byzantine edifice gradually compelling admiration. At present the interior is a colossal arrangement of bricks—unpointed, unadorned, thousands of bare bricks fixed in the noble lines that the large mind of the architect devised. It is an eloquent shell, but nothing more than a shell, and the small porphyry pillars that have already been placed in

position look incongruously delicate and complete amid that wilderness of bare bricks. It needed courage, a quality that the late Mr. Bentley had in abundance, to will that a Byzantine cathedral should soar above the flats and shops of Victoria Street; it needed courage on Cardinal Vaughan's part to select and approve Mr. Bentley's plan, and it will take time before a public brought up on Gothic, drawn to it by a thousand memories, will learn to appreciate this Byzantine dream of a western architect, the realisation of which cost him his life. All the architects to whom I have spoken heartily commend the design, some, indeed, are enthusiastic; but the public, always sentimental, always faithful to old buildings and old favourites, are on the side of Gothic and Mr. W. D. Howells. Once when wandering among the palaces of Genoa, growing, bit by bit, a little bored by their white unimaginative beauty, suddenly he came upon the Duomo—"O beloved beauty of aspiring arches, of slender and clustering columns, of flowering capitals and window-traceries, of many carven breadths and heights, wherein all nature breathes and blossoms again. There is neither Greek perfection, nor winning Byzantine languor, nor insolent Renaissance opulence, which may compare with the loveliness of yours."

But it is unfair to judge the Westminster Cathedral in its present condition. The bold design, the noble proportions are there, but the decorations that are to give colour and beauty to the interior have still to be born in the brain of some artist. It is a stupendous task, and the man to whom it is allotted will need to have a sweeping range of pictorial vision, strength, and a decision of purpose not common among moderns.

It is proposed to cover the walls up to the spring of the arches with marble; all above is to be mosaic.

But what kind of design shall the mosaics perpetuate in enduring coloured glass? Cardinal Vaughan, it is said, favours a representation of the history of the Church in England, which suggested to an impractical Wordsworthian a series of illustrations of the Ecclesiastical Sonnets. There are forty-seven of these. But where is the decorative artist to whom could be entrusted the task of decorating the walls and roof of the Cathedral with a representation of the history of religion in England? There are many men who could make episodic incidents passably interesting and attractive, but to weld detached scenes into a homogeneous whole, so that an individual seated in his small chair on the vast floor of the building can feel that he is looking at a composition, and not a series of incidents, would require a great, a very great decorative talent. Is any living man equal to it? Names have been mentioned, and the favourite is a young decorative artist who is not a member of the Royal Academy. But he would need to devote his life to the work if he decided to make all the designs himself. As to the time required for carrying out the work in mosaic, any period up to a quarter of a century has been mentioned. Perhaps in despair of finding an artist, the authorities will determine to exclude representations of the human figure altogether—a decision that I, for one, would welcome. The figures would have to be of gigantic size to be seen at all from the nave, and artists of these days have not shown ourselves very happy in so conventionalising the figure that it can take its place in a decorative scheme. If the figure is excluded, what form should the decoration take? One ingenious suggestion is that the mosaics on the roof should be a symbolical representation of the firmament with the stars and constellations showing on a blue background, and perhaps the sun rising in the east. Another is that they should represent the sea, with fishes darting here and there, and nets, symbolically treated, cast, not in vain, into the waters. But we seem to have lost the capacity for producing fine, or even adequate mural paintings. There is a small band of decorators

working among us, but easel pictures claim most of the painting talent.

Take a walk into the City and spend half-an-hour in the Royal Exchange. There you may see the most recent examples of mural decoration that this country has produced. Protected from rain by the glass roof that covers the Royal Exchange, further protected by being affixed to the walls of the cloister that runs round the quadrangle, their purpose is to remind citizens of the antiquity of the City. But they are not decorative paintings at all. The men who painted them, with one exception, are painters of historical pictures—not decorative artists. The costumes are accurate, the likenesses are familiar and therefore presumably accurate, the compositions, if generally too crowded, are academically capable. There are nine at present on the walls, and room can be found for at least twenty more. Certainly they are educative. For example there is the "opening of the First Royal Exchange by Queen Elizabeth in 1570, painted by Mr. Crofts," and the "opening of the present Royal Exchange by Queen Victoria in 1844, painted by Mr. R. W. Macbeth." One of the best, the only one in fact that shows the right feeling for decoration, is the late Lord Leighton's "Phoenicians trading with the Early Britons on the coast of Cornwall."

The next mural painting to be placed in position in the Royal Exchange is by Mr. Frank Brangwyn, a decorative artist who justly receives high praise in Mr. A. L. Baldry's work on *Modern Mural Decoration* (George Newnes) which has just been published. This volume is something between a text book and a gift book. It describes briefly the various methods of mural painting, and includes over a hundred illustrations. Some are well chosen, others can only have been selected because of their historic interest, or because they adorn the show-places of the world. One misses illustrations of the Boston Library decorations by Mr. Sargent and Mr. Abbey, certainly the most interesting mural paintings of our time; but their exclusion was probably unavoidable. The illustrations in this volume should be useful to Cardinal Vaughan in teaching him what to avoid when the moment comes to decide on the Westminster Cathedral decorations. Most of them have every quality except quiet beauty and repose. Has anybody ever really derived any pleasure from looking at the ceiling of the Diana Salon at Versailles, or the ceiling of the Hotel des Archives at Paris, or Baudry's gaudy decorations at the Opera, or Picard's ceiling at the Hotel de Ville? It is a relief to come upon Burne-Jones's quiet, cool wall paintings in the Earl of Carlisle's house, and the simplicity of Mr. Voysey's tiled fireplaces. Quite satisfying too in their different styles, and beautiful, are Puvis de Chavanne's wall paintings in the Sorbonne, Paris, and Mr. Ford Madox Brown's spirit frescoes in the Town Hall, Manchester.

C. L. H.

Science.

What is Memory?

Of all the faculties possessed by the brain, that of memory is, perhaps, the most mysterious. That the brain should receive sensations from the outer world and transmute them into actions we can understand, and that it should so organise its functions as to have separate centres for sight, hearing, speech, and even writing, seems likely enough. But that it should possess in addition the faculty of storing up old impressions and reproducing them, not indeed at will, but consciously and in accordance with laws very imperfectly understood, is a phenomenon which contrasts strongly with most of our ideas concerning it. Hence, man, after his manner, has chosen to consider memory first as a gift sent straight from Heaven to himself

alone, then as one peculiar to himself and to the higher animals. It seems to have been repugnant to his pride to regard memory as the attribute of matter wherever found.

This, however, is the view that physiologists are now inclined to take of it. To take the fundamental experiment shown by Dr. Mercier in his recent lecture upon the subject before the Royal Institution, if we twist a strained iron wire with a certain amount of force, it flies back to its original position directly the force ceases to be applied. But if the force be increased until what is called the limit of elasticity is reached, the wire acquires a permanent twist or "set," which is neither increased nor diminished by future applications of the same amount of force. This seems to be exactly analogous to what happens within our own brains. Some impressions have only force enough behind them to transmute themselves into action and then to fade away, leaving no more trace than if they had never reached us; while others are deep enough to be enduring. But there is in this respect a great difference between living and dead matter. While substances such as metals retain practically for ever the twist or set once imparted to them, living tissue, such as, for instance, the bough of a tree gradually returns to its original condition by a process with which elasticity has nothing to do. The memory produced by the twisting is in fact dulled by the earlier and more permanent memory of the original arrangement of the cells of which the living tissue consists. But it is not altogether lost. Every time that a fresh twist is given to the bough the cells hasten to arrange themselves in the new order forced upon them by the original twist with gradually increasing speed and precision, until at last they adopt the new order in place of the old. The same explanation has been given of the process involved in the healing of a wound.

Neither the wire nor the tree, however, are at all times endowed with the same capacity for receiving a permanent set. The process may be facilitated by heating the iron to redness, or by warming, as do stick-makers, the bough that we wish to bend. The same condition seems to be produced in the brain during periods of great mental excitement. Hence, the stories that we hear of a man's whole life flashing before him when he is drowning may not be altogether false, and Dr. Mercier himself tells us that the events of a certain night thirty-five years ago when he had the ill-luck to be shipwrecked are still vividly present to him. So it seems probable that in youth, when the attention is both more intense and more easily aroused, we receive impressions that are more enduring, because deeper, than those which are experienced at more mature age. Thus is explained the phenomenon that we constantly witness of old men who remember even trivial incidents which occurred to them in their youth, but forget more important ones that have happened a few days before. The Latin grammar which is impressed upon us in our childhood often remains with us to the exclusion, perhaps, of preferable matters, and Dr. Mercier thinks the reasoning scientifically sound which led to the flogging of schoolboys at the boundaries of the parish, so that they might remember them in after years.

It does not follow from this that the memory and the consciousness are always connected, and their dissociation gives rise to some singular happenings. The constant repetition of an air to which we are paying no attention whatever will often lead to its again presenting itself to us afterwards at inopportune moments, and Coleridge mentions the case of a servant girl who could neither read nor write, but who had been accustomed to hear her master recite Greek and Hebrew, and therefore reeled off both languages with unintelligent fluency in a fit of delirium. This throws some light upon the facility with which we acquire foreign languages by residence in the countries where they are spoken, and also upon the extraordinary remarks sometimes indulged in by patients under the influence of anaesthetics. It is probable, too, that it accounts for the

images that appear to us in dreams, and it is quite certain that nothing comes into our brains during sleep save the sensations that we actually experience, although their irrational mixture with the memories of former ones often leads to very odd combinations. Whether it is true, as Dr. Mercier thinks, that the conscious memory weakens and fades as what he calls the active memory becomes stronger, remains to be proved: and in any case, it is probable that all the phenomena of consciousness have not yet received full attention.

There remains to be said whether the memory of the individual can be permanently improved, and whether any of the nostrums often put forward with that purpose have any real value. The better opinion seems to be that in this respect only practice is of any avail, and that the man who has a good memory is only the man who is always committing things to memory. But even in this there is a great difference between individuals, and while everybody's memory could probably be improved up to a certain point, it is no less probable that everyone has certain subjects upon which memories are more easily formed than on others. The most familiar case is, of course, that of musical sound, as to which some persons have powers of memory which are perfectly surprising. Memories for figures which have been seen (not heard) are also far from uncommon, while some, like Macaulay, have the most acute and accurate memories for facts. Yet it is seldom that the same persons combine any two of these special aptitudes, and the fact seems to prove clearly enough that they are due to one part of the brain being from some unexplained cause more sensitive to impression than the others. Could we discover some means of rendering more sensitive the whole area of the cerebral cortex at once, we might all be as clever as the Admirable Crichton. But in that case, the fate of Aurelian McGoggin would probably come upon us, and the result of driving the whole machine at full speed would be likely to end in the disorganisation of one or more of its component parts.

F. LEGGE.

Correspondence.

Mr. Samuel Butler.

SIR,—In the chronological list of Mr. Samuel Butler's publications in last week's issue, *The Authoress of the Odyssey* (1897) is omitted. Of all his works, with perhaps the exception of *Erewhon*, this was, I think, the one on which he prided himself most; and it was always a sorrow to him that no one challenged his theory. He tried to derive consolation from the circumstance that as no argument was brought against it there was none, but he was disappointed that no scholar entered the lists against him.

The very cordial reception accorded to *Erewhon Revisited* was a source of great pleasure, as he was doubtful how it might fare.

To thoroughly enjoy Mr. Butler's writings one had to know him: then quaint little turns and interpolated remarks of quiet humour came with double force, and one could realise the merry twinkle and quiet smile with which he would have uttered them. Those who were admitted to Mr. Butler's friendship will not readily forget that old-world courtesy and charm of manner which grew with acquaintance.—Yours obediently, F. B. B.

"And Which."

SIR,—In the ACADEMY of the 14th June you quote *Macmillan's* condemnation of "and which." It is an ugly

turn of phrase in English. It is equally ugly in French. Yet in the *Causeries du Lundi* you will find—

Nicolas Fouquet . . . était fils d'un père breton, riche armateur, et que Richelieu avait fait entrer dans le Conseil de la marine.

Here the "et" prevents the sentence dependent on "que" from seeming to be in apposition to *armateur*, and refers it back to *père*. This refinement would not occur to an Englishman's less logical mind. We would cheerfully say that Nicholas Fouquet was the son of a Breton father, a rich shipowner whom Richelieu appointed, &c. We might even argue that it was *quâ* shipowner, and not *quâ* the father of Nicholas, that the Breton was appointed. Yet Sainte-Beuve no doubt felt that the main subject of the sentence is Fouquet's father, and to that subject the dependent sentences should be linked. Perhaps some of your readers can suggest English parallels. As a rule, "and which" is simply hideous and indefensible.—Yours,

J. A.

"That Insect."

SIR,—"*Lepidoptera*," in my letter was a slip for "*Coleoptera*"; it is the beetle tribe to which Americans mainly apply the term "bug." (I am quite aware that Mr. Dallas could tell us that "*Coleoptera*" is not absolutely synonymous with "beetles.") Common examples are the May-bug or June-bug (Ger. *Maikäfer*), a kind of cockchafer, and the water-bug, the familiar "black beetle" of our kitchens.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES F. MUIRHEAD.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 145 (New Series).

Last week we offered a prize One Guinea for the best description of a dream. We award it to Mr. E. R. Punshon, 17, Makin Street, Walton, Liverpool, for the following:—

I dreamed that I stood on a low sandy shore. Before me stretched a great sea, murmurous with tiny waves. Beyond the horizon, hidden from my sight but not from my knowledge, sat an angel. At his feet were a number of envelopes bearing the names of men. These he was opening one by one at regular intervals and from each in succession flashed out a huge light spreading over half the sky and proclaiming eternal judgment, the salvation or the damnation of the person whose name had been written.

Presently I became aware that the next to be opened would declare my own fate. I ran blindly to and fro, watching dreadfully, till at last the great light flashed out, the sky flamed with the sentence, and as I strained to read it, I awoke.

I suppose that at the time of this dream I would be about ten years old. I distinctly remember my frantic efforts to be very good indeed for several days after.

From thirty-five other "dreams" received, we select the following:—

My husband's duty, as the sub-postmaster of a rural post office, caused him to rise half-an-hour before myself on Tuesday morning last (June 24th), and after he had left the room (which I well remember), I dozed off and dreamt the following singular dream. I was in the house of a late neighbour on the Isle of Wight, whom we will call Mr. K—, when the King came in, looking so ill, and declaring he wanted rest, and begged of me to prepare a room for him and to keep his presence a secret. He rewarded me with a sovereign and a half sovereign, and whilst doing as he asked me I awoke, only to find that I could not have slept more than 10 minutes. Please to note! I had no knowledge of the King's possible trouble, nor of any trouble in Mr. K—'s house, for I had neither seen nor heard of him for six months, but this is the sequel. Mr. K— died the previous night, and the world now knows the King's need of rest.

[E. C., Chichester.]

In early life I lived for many years in Australia. This was to me a time of exile, and at night my last waking thoughts were usually of my native land. Compensation often came to me in my dreams. Oh! the joy of going to sleep and finding myself once more among

the haunts of my childhood. One dream occurs to me as perhaps more characteristic than the rest. I fancied I was standing once again on London Bridge: as of old the grey river flowed on beneath, whilst past me the tide of human life incessantly swept by: but heedless of all stood the dreamer. Then as caught by some irresistible impulse which expressed the pent-up longings of many years, I flung myself passionately upon the pavement and kissed the flagstones again and again. Then someone stopped beside me, and asked, "What are you doing—are you mad, or why do you act thus?" and I answered, "I am kissing the stones because I love every inch of this city where I was born." Then I woke to the brilliant light of the Southern dawn, some twelve thousand miles from the dear Homeland.

[A. C. C., Tunbridge Wells.]

I dreamt that as I lay in my bed I saw my father-in-law standing before the toilet table in my bedroom, shaving. At the same time I saw him in the next room—the folding doors being open—lying dead in his coffin. I glanced from one to the other without perceiving any incongruity at all in the very diverse conditions under which he was presented to my view. After a short interval, during which he neither spoke nor looked at me, I suddenly awoke.

This dream, I fancy, is interesting as showing that the faculty of comparison by which we can detect an absurdity or incongruity in our waking state is often paralysed or in abeyance during our dreams. One hemisphere of the brain, I presume, corrects the false impressions of the other when both are awake, but here, one hemisphere being asleep, I did not perceive any incongruity in the extraordinary spectacle.

[F. B. D., Torquay.]

In a semicircle before the portico of a huge cathedral, their eyes fixed steadfastly upon the door, sat twenty old men. Silent, wise, inexorable, they were judging a woman in their midst. She was nursing the child that had died with her at its birth, and heeded nought else, her love as silently combating their wisdom.

But their wisdom prevailed. Her arms were empty, the child rapt within the cathedral. In a passion of grief she floated to the door. But it remained closed. She beat upon it with her thin hands, and clutched at the nails studding it, fluttering up and down, waiting and sobbing and imploring, till she sank in an agony before it, and lay there with a frozen horror of doubt upon her face—as if for added punishment the dead might still doubt.

Not for long. In her face grew the faith again radiant—and in her arms lay her child. Upward with it she passed, and was lost in a splendour of sunlight above.

But still the old men sat on, silent, wise, inexorable. No change had flicked their impassivity for a moment. Yet they were living and she was dead.

[G. H., Lincoln's Inn.]

It was Coronation Day, but instead of a bright June morning, dark, black, impenetrable night. No moon or star, no lamp or light of any kind to relieve the gloom. No gay light-hearted crowds were assembled to see the Procession, but silent, apprehensive crowds oppressed by a nameless fear.

I was in a stand full of people, immediately below us a precipice, and at the bottom of the precipice a narrow gorge the other side of which rose sheer and high. Straining my eyes through the darkness I was dimly aware of ghost-like forms moving slowly along the gorge. This was the Procession. Just as the King himself was approaching in the State coach, suddenly, to my extreme horror, the stand we were in began to move slowly down the steep hill side. Though we were safe I knew the King must certainly be killed. Down we crashed right on to the State coach.

Was the King dead?

I could not tell for certain, and yet I seemed to know that the King by some almost miraculous feat of presence of mind had contrived to save his life.

And in the darkness and confusion I awoke.

[A. L. H., London.]

Competition No. 146 (New Series).

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best paper entitled "The Failure in My Life which I Regret Least Now."

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